Nihil Obstat
JOANNES FITZPATRICK, M.A., D.D.,
Censor Dep.

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PASSIONIST ALMANAC

MAY 1937

DATE	FEAST	ANNIVERSARIES OF DECEASED PASSIONISTS
1 Sat.	SS. PHILIP AND JAMES, App.	Rev. Fr. Fernando (Saavedra), C.P.—1922.
2 **SUN.**	**✠5th SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.**	
3 Mon.	FINDING OF THE HOLY CROSS.	
4 Tues.	St. Monica, W.	
5 Wed.	Octave of St. Paul of the Cross.	
6 Thurs.	✠ASCENSION OF OUR LORD. H.O.	
7 Fri.	St. Stanislaus, B.M.	
8 Sat.	Apparition of St. Michael, Archangel.	Bro. Peter (O'Sullivan), C.P.—1908.
9 **SUN.**	**✠SUNDAY IN OCTAVE OF ASCENSION.**	
10 Mon.	St. Antonine, B.C.	Rev. Fr. Bernardine (Carosi), C.P.—1890. Rev. Fr. Fidelis (Doyle), C.P.—1920.
11 Tues.	6th day in Octave of the Ascension.	Bro. Alexander (Schezskowski), C.P.—1930.
12 Wed.	SS. Nereus and Companions, MM.	Rev. Fr. Matthew (Kelly), C.P.—1929.
13 Thurs.	Octave of the Ascension.	✠Most Rev. Dr. Patrick Fallon, C.P.—1879.
14 Fri.	BLESSED GEMMA GALGANI, V.	Bro. Gabriel (Donnelly), C.P.—1935.
15 Sat.	Vigil of Pentecost, F.A.	Bro. Vincent (Leahy), C.P.—1894.
16 **SUN.**	**✠PENTECOST SUNDAY.**	Bro. Patrick (Casey), C.P.—1890. Conf. Paul Joseph (Monselle), C.P.—1891.
17 Mon.	2nd day in Octave of Pentecost.	
18 Tues.	3rd day in Octave of Pentecost.	
19 Wed.	4th day in Octave of Pentecost.	
20 Thurs.	5th day in Octave of Pentecost.	
21 Fri.	6th day in Octave of Pentecost.	
22 Sat.	7th day in Octave of Pentecost.	Bro. Sylvester (Macklin), C.P.—1901.
23 **SUN.**	**✠THE MOST HOLY TRINITY.**	
24 Mon.	Feria.	
25 Tues.	St. Gregory VII, P.C.	
26 Wed.	St. Philip Neri, C.	Rev. Fr. Reginald (Magee), C.P.—1897.
27 Thurs.	✠CORPUS CHRISTI. H.O.	
28 Fri.	2nd day in Octave of Corpus Christi.	Rev. Fr. Brendan (Ivory), C.P.—1890.
29 Sat.	3rd day in Octave of Corpus Christi.	Rev. Fr. Anthony (Carroll), C.P.—1904. Rev. Fr. John Baptist (Wooloughan), C.P.—9121.
30 **SUN.**	**✠SUNDAY IN OCT. OF CORPUS CHRISTI**	
31 Mon.	5th day in Octave of Corpus Christi.	Rev. Fr. Hilarion (M'Elhone), C.P.—1884. Rev. Fr. Norbert (McGettigan), C.P.—1900.

Abbreviations: H.O.—Holiday of Obligation. F.A.—Fast with Abstinence. Ap.—Apostle. B.—Bishop. C.—Confessor. M.—Martyr. V.—Virgin. W.—Widow.

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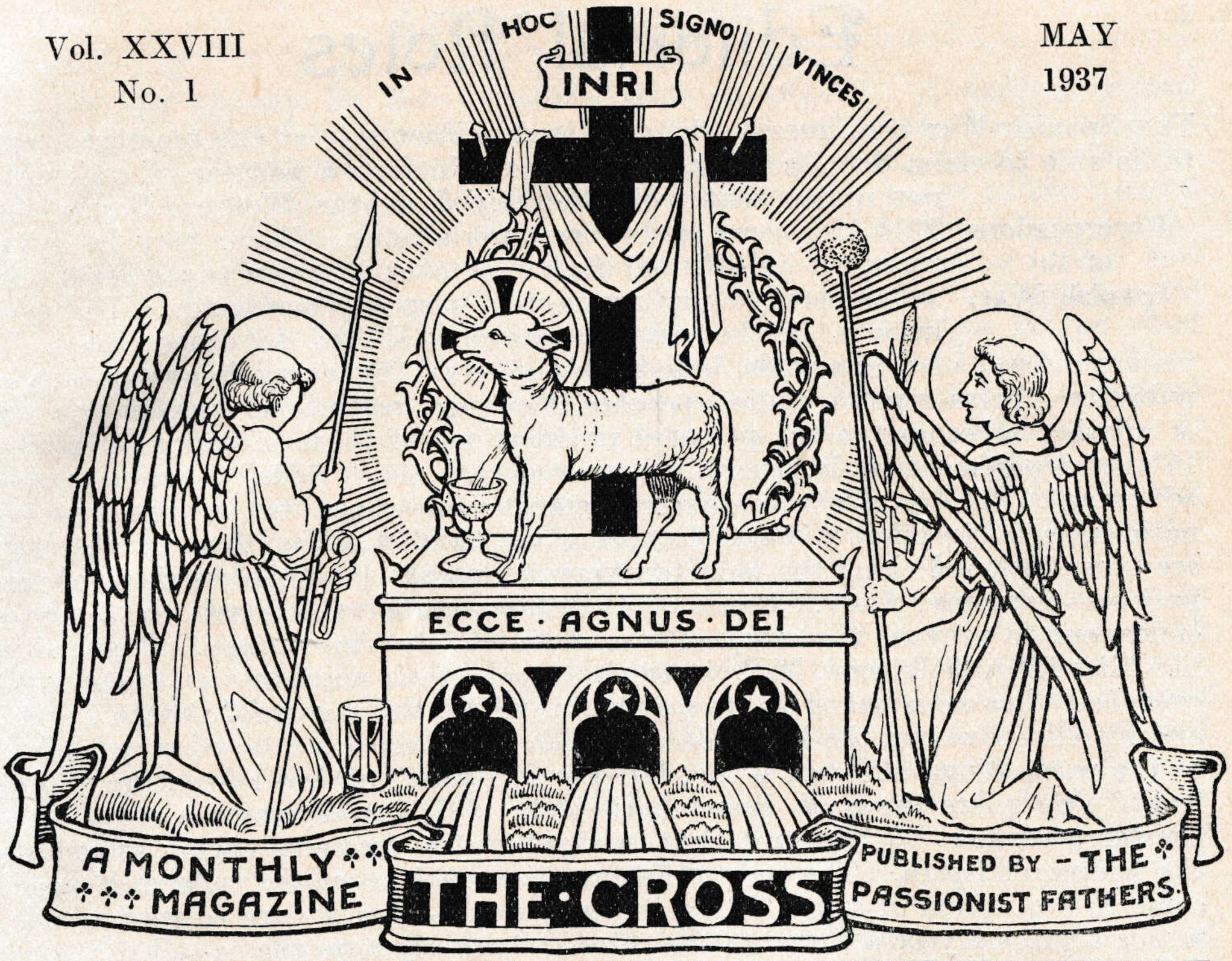

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The Month of Mary

From time immemorial the month of May has been dedicated to the Mother of God. There is something both significant and appropriate in the dedication. The sweetness and the freshness of the Springtime of the year are themselves emblematic of the fragrance of virtue which adorned the soul of Mary. After the darkness and the hardship of winter, all nature rejoices in the return of warm and gladsome summer days, of which the blossoms of May are the harbinger and the promise. Can we not here perceive a symbol of the long dark night of Israel's waiting for the coming of the promised Redeemer, and of the coming of the Blessed Virgin, she who was to have the inestimable privilege of becoming the Mother of the Saviour ?

Devotion to Mary is almost instinctive in every Catholic heart. From our earliest days we have been taught to revere her and to honour her. The familiar and oft-repeated prayers in which her name is blessed have brought us comfort and consolation in the midst of many trials. The memory of the May devotions is one of the most cherished souvenirs of our vanished youth. And even to our last years, a filial and childlike devotion to her is a sure passport to eternal happiness.

But a devotion which consists in words only is a poor and empty thing. The best, and indeed the only way to prove our devotion to Mary is to imitate her virtues, and thus to merit her timely protection in the hour of danger. Her intrepid faith, her immaculate purity, her profound obedience, her boundless charity—these are virtues which should be reflected in every soul that seeks to justify the proud title : " Child of Mary."

Fr. Edmund, C.P.

Editorial Notes

THE Spanish War continues to drag on, and neither side at the moment seems to be able to claim definite military successes. In fact, a position of stalemate, not unlike that which developed on the Western Front from 1914-18, seems to be fast approaching. There may be minor successes on different fronts, or even a major engagement, but we cannot see any prospect of a speedy conclusion. The main interest of the struggle has now shifted to other fronts. A veritable flood of propaganda inundates the world by every known means of publicity; press reports, radio, speeches, meetings, resolutions support one side or another according to the personal predilections of those in charge of affairs. In this department, it is generally admitted that the "Reds" have a marked advantage. The non-intervention agreement, subscribed to by twenty-seven nations, is a big effort towards localising the conflict. Hundreds of observers are now stationed along the land frontiers of Spain, whilst the warships of four nations—Germany, Italy, France and Britain—watch the coasts in a united endeavour to prevent the entry of war material into the country. Busybodies, like Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., continue to poke their noses into an affair which everybody has been asked to keep out of; whilst the saga of "Potato Jones" and his efforts to run the blockade at Bilbao have added a note of grim humour to the proceedings. Nearer home, Mr. Frank Ryan "on leave from the Madrid front" (we quote the *Irish Press*, April 19th, 1937) has delivered a cryptic and sinister utterance. "We must fight in this country the same enemy as opposes the people of Spain. The only difference is that here *at the moment* it hasn't come to a question of arms." The italics are ours—and we are entitled to ask: is this a prophecy or a threat? Mr. Frank Ryan supports the so-called Spanish "Government." Is he preparing to introduce their tactics to Ireland? The implication of his statement is too obvious to be lightly disregarded. And the plain people are entitled to an explanation of his words.

Repercussions of the Spanish War.

* * * * *

FOR many years the Saorstát has enjoyed the unenviable distinction of having *the lowest marriage-rate in the world*! Every priest and social worker who is acquainted with conditions prevailing in the rural parts of the country is well aware of that disquieting phenomenon, evidenced by the large number of bachelor men and bachelor women who cannot be induced to wed. To some extent the low marriage rate is offset by a very high fertility rate, so that the birth-rate remains average. But the present state of affairs is decidedly bad. The marriage rate in the Saorstát for the last quarter of 1936 was 4.5 per 1,000, which is 0.1 above the average for the five years 1931-35. In Northern Ireland the marriage rate for the quarter was 6.8; in Scotland, 7.5, and in England and Wales 8.6 per 1,000. In the cities, economic stress and the difficulty of obtaining a suitable home are major obstacles in the path of young folk contemplating marriage. But in the country such obstacles do not exist to the same extent. In plain, blunt language, there are hundreds of young men and women who ought to get married and who won't get married. What's to be done about it? In some cases the unreasonable opposition of parents is to blame. Obstinate and short-sighted fathers and mothers refuse to allow their sons to leave the parental home to found homes of their own. The result is seen in the vast population of elderly unmarried men and equally elderly unmarried women who are spending the declining years of their life in loneliness, and in the accumulation of land or property for which there are no direct heirs. In an appalling number of parishes marriages have dwindled down to vanishing-point; and we see the result in the diminution of school-averages which is beginning to attract national attention.

Saorstat Marriage Rate.

Is there any remedy for this unnatural state of affairs? A solution of this difficulty is imperatively demanded, and should be put in the forefront of all social undertakings. First of all, our young people should be encouraged and instructed to look upon marriage as the natural vocation for all those who are not called to the religious state or the priesthood. Then it should be pointed out that late middle-age is not the ideal time for matrimony. Youth has its legitimate aspirations which demand fulfilment. Early marriages are an ideal blessed by God, encouraged by the Church, and necessary for the race. They should therefore be fostered by all possible means, and regarded as a natural and healthy symptom of a sane social system. A change in public opinion is long overdue, and the selfish bachelor should be regarded as an object of pity rather than as a hero. His attitude is definitely anti-social, and those who will not shoulder their responsibilities voluntarily must be made to realise them by legislative discrimination. Some have blamed the girls of this generation for avoiding the drudgery of the kitchen and the worries of household life. It is alleged that they prefer to keep their independence, to have what is called "a good time," and to have no higher aspiration than to dance their way heedlessly through life. In our opinion this allegation is both unjust and untrue. And what other avenue is open to them if their natural vocation is frustrated by the selfishness or the timidity of our too-numerous bachelor population? We have a superabundance of pension-schemes for all classes of people. Is it not high time to introduce a marriage bonus? The amount necessary for the scheme could be raised by a tax on bachelors. Then watch the marriage rate soar!

Is there any Remedy?

* * * * *

A COUPLE of months ago we referred to a notable omission at the forthcoming Paris Exhibition of 1937 in our editorial comment "The Village without a Church." But we are happy to say that there will be at least one notable church at the Exhibition, a church unique in its sponsor and in its purpose. Undoubtedly the most remarkable of the pavilions for all Catholic visitors will be the Papal Pavilion, the corner-stone of which was laid last December, and which is now approaching completion. This is the very first occasion upon which the Holy See has officially participated in any International Exhibition. The moral import of this event has a very marked significance. Whether people are willing to admit it or not, the Sovereign Power of the Pope really exists; and this imposing pavilion, surmounted by a cross of stone, is a tangible gesture of its reality. Around the main altar, twelve chapels reserved for different countries, will bear their national colours—an eloquent example of the supra-national unity of the Church. In an eloquent discourse, Fr. Reviers de Mauny, Commissioner General for the Holy See, pointed out the purpose and the significance of the Papal Pavilion. "His Holiness has but to say the word" he declared, "and thousands of labourers set to work, thousands of pilgrims take the road. The Pope saw fit to say the word, and we are proud that the first Papal Pavilion in the history of World Expositions will be built on French soil. From all over the world Catholics are preparing to come to France. They will be received in their own national Pavilions—but they will also be received in this church, which is theirs as it is ours, because it is Catholic!"

Papal Pavilion at Paris Exhibition.

* * * * *

THE vigorous Encyclical of the Supreme Pontiff dealing with the covert persecution of the Church in Germany has provoked a bellicose protest from Herr Hitler's Government. It will be remembered that the Pope voiced his indignation at the numerous breaches of the Concordat, particularly with regard to the education of Catholic youth. In the clearest and most unequivocal terms the Pope vindicated the rights of the Church in this matter. The German Note in

German Answer to Papal Encyclical.

answer to the Encyclical claims that Catholics number only one-third of the entire population, that the State has observed the provisions of the Concordat and that any violations which have occurred are attributed to the intransigent attitude of the Church. The State Press, taking its cue from the Government, has characterised the Encyclical as an unjustified interference in German domestic affairs. Against this last allegation the Apostolic Nuncio in Berlin, Mgr. Orsenigo entered a formal protest at the German Foreign Office, which however was received in a hostile and uncompromising fashion. If the situation continues to develop at the present rate, it can only end in an open breach between the Reich and the Holy See. The Bishop of Berlin, Mgr. Preysing announces the latest Nazi " reprisal " as a consequence of the Encyclical. All public collections for Catholic charities have been forbidden ; the collections will therefore be held in the churches. Meanwhile the drive against the Catholic schools continues with unabated vigour. The Minister for Education has banned several Catholic text-books from use in the elementary schools. In many dioceses the teaching Sisters have been dismissed from the schools. As the Bishop of Muenster has pointed out, the Nazis are systematically undermining the whole Catholic school system by means of terror and oppression, whilst the Church remains completely helpless.

* * * * *

Three New Catholic Periodicals.

RECENT Catholic Press Exhibitions, both National and International, have drawn attention to our strength and to our weakness in fostering the growth of the Catholic Press. A general view of the field of Catholic Press activity in Ireland would reveal a couple of rather ordinary weekly papers ; an abundance of foreign missionary magazines, designed to foster and propagate interest in this important branch of the Church's activity ; a handful of excellent periodicals of general Catholic interest ; two rather " high-brow " reviews of excellent cultural value ; and a miscellaneous collection of " pious publications " which do their best to edify when they fail either to interest or to instruct. It is very encouraging to note the appearance of three excellent periodicals which fill notable gaps in the front rank of our press activity. Pride of place is given to *Hibernia*, a monthly of great interest which contains contributions of genuine and permanent value. Attractively produced, brightly written, and covering a wide field of thought, *Hibernia* is a typical product of a new Ireland, thoughtful, critical of current events, constructive in its comment upon debated topics, and one hundred per cent. Catholic. Then the *Redemptorist Record*, which appears every two months, worthily represents the great missionary tradition of the Redemptorist Fathers. Its contributors deal with topics of general Catholic interest in a manner which attracts the reader's thoughtful attention. Finally, *Maria Legionis*, the quarterly organ of the Legion of Mary, strikes a new and welcome note in Catholic journalism. The Editor's hope is justified for " the qualities of the Legion—simplicity, earnestness, courage and cheerfulness—appear on almost every page." We commend these three periodicals to the attention of our readers—at the same time extending our sincere congratulations to all concerned.

OUR NEW VOLUME.

With this Number " THE CROSS " commences its Twenty-Eighth Year. Whilst thanking our readers for their continued support, may we take this opportunity of giving a timely reminder to those whose Subscription may be in arrears.

Using the Key to Catholic Action

JOHN F. POWER

Every activity carried on by the Church becomes a matter of personal concern when we are conscious of our relationship with the Mystical Body of Christ. Here is a key to the solution of many problems : : : : : : : :

IN a former article we said that it was essential for us to have a vivid realisation of St. Paul's Teaching of the Mystical Body of Christ. We saw that it must needs be the very basis of true Catholic Action, for without it our efforts would lack that enthusiasm and zeal which are so necessary. If Catholic Action is to become a vital, a dynamic force, then it must be built upon the fact of the layman's definite position in the Life of the Church, and this position is given to him in virtue of his Membership of the Living, Mystical Body of Christ. As a Live "Cell" in that Body he has his part to play in the life of the Organism as a whole, and his work is linked up with that of the Church in One great Unity Whose Head is Christ.

But the fact of having such a Key to Catholic Action and the use of that Key are not identical, and it may be that some of our readers while admitting the force of St. Paul's doctrine, failed to understand how it could be used in concrete cases. Our intention this month is to show some of the ways in which this Key can be applied and the transforming power which it possesses.

At the outset, St. Paul's doctrine removes the danger of the "isolated" Catholic. Most of us have had experience of that pitiful figure the "Sunday" Catholic! Six days of the week his speech, example, work and duties are such as to give little or no evidence of his Catholicity; in fact, he is indistinguishable from thousands of men and women to whom religion means nothing. His reading, amusements and his friends and his home, give little or no indication of the Faith, and if he is unwittingly drawn into discussion on a religious topic, then he evades or murmurs something about it being the priest's business, or a mock sentiment of broadmindedness to the effect that he is not a bigot.

All this is not to say that he is deliberately lax but rather that he looks upon religion as a *department* of life having one day a week set aside for itself. He even allows his own mind to become departmentalised so that the pigeon-hole labelled "religion" is completely cut off from his work, his recreations and his normal life. The religious side of his nature is regarded by him as but a *side*, and takes on a somewhat unnatural aspect when contrasted with everyday routine. Now this feeling of isolation cannot co-exist with a firm understanding of the doctrine of the Mystical Body. Isolation becomes a sheer impossibility when the fact of his organic relationship to all his fellow-Catholics is grasped. The Church is then not merely an organisation which he has "joined" but a Living Entity of Which he himself is an integral unit. The Faith is seen not as an aspect of life, not as something which even "colours" his ordinary existence, but as the true, the only real life. He then understands that Catholicism is a Life to be Lived, that the Church is a Living Unity of Which he is a living part, that he can no more be isolated or departmentalised than his own heart or hand can be isolated from his own body. He begins to grasp Life as a Whole and not as a series of religious and secular actions bearing little or no relation to each other.

Having reached this stage, our erstwhile "Sunday" Catholic will have grasped the Key and will now begin to seek Locks into which it will fit smoothly and silently; Locks, or problems to which he had sought an answer vainly.

His own work, profession or craft provides the first use for the Key. From

being a mere means of earning a livelihood he now begins to regard it as a real "Calling," a Vocation, and in it he now finds opportunities which had escaped him in the past. St. Paul's doctrine having seized upon his imagination, he is able to understand the true meaning of Vocation. No longer does it limit itself to the Priesthood, the Religious Life, but penetrates every possible work and profession so that the sanctity of those who were doctors, teachers, soldiers, labourers, writers and the rest ceases to be an enigma. He sees that it was not in spite of their work, but through it and, under God, because of it, that they became Saints. It was their Vocation, and in it they found a means of living lives of sanctity and real Catholicity.

The Saint when viewed from this standpoint becomes a living reality rather than a historic example, and the layman is able to enter into the meaning of Vocation with an understanding which transforms his profession into something glorious and noble. This whether it be the Chair of a University or the selling of cabbages.

So it will be with regard to his state of life. Once his place in Christ's Mystical Body be understood he will not err in his attitude towards the Sanctity of Marriage, regarding it as a second-best to Celibacy. He will realise that Virginity or Matrimony, while differing in their scale of perfection as such, yet must be viewed according to the individual. While reverencing the higher state of Virginity, he will realise that it is for the few, and that for the many the state of Matrimony is for *them* a Vocation, and for those called to it a Holy and Sacred Calling. He will learn to judge the two states not as conflicting but as complementary, each being *for those called to it* the way of Life in which they can best serve God.

Marriage will be seen not as a *second-best*, but as best for those to whom such a Vocation is given. It will show the coming together of two members of Christ's Mystical Body so that they are not now two, but One in Christ. The long procession of married Saints will then strike upon the mind with greater force and will help to enforce the beauty and sanctity of Catholic Marriage. Such will be the outlook of the Catholic who has realised St. Paul's glorious conception of the Life of the Christian in Christ.

From his own life in its more individual aspects we turn to the Catholic as a member of the community. Here we are faced with the many great problems of political and social life which are so obvious in our modern world. Can we expect any key to them from St. Paul? After all is it to be expected that a theological foundation such as the Mystical Body can have any concern with social and political affairs?

We must remember that Man is two-fold in that he has a Soul and Body, and it is the combination of these two, the spiritual and the material, that constitutes his humanity. If Man is a Member of Christ's Mystical Body then his membership will influence and transform his life whether in the individual, social or national spheres. The Catholic is the better citizen in so far as he is the better Catholic. Church and State are not of their nature opposites, but complementaries, each having as its subject the same person, man. Each exists to promote his welfare according to the means given to each by God, and the opposition which may be found is not due to inherent contradiction but to some violation of rights, usually on the part of the State.

Here St. Paul's doctrine of our membership of Christ's Mystical Body can teach us much. We are, St. Paul tells us, members one of another in Christ and therefore the true Christian State will be based upon the fact of Christian Truth and Justice with Charity. The Legislature which outlaws or ignores Christ is rejecting Him Who gives it its authority to govern. The State which rules without reference to Christ must be brought back to a recognition of Christ's Right to Rule first. We are Catholics, members of Christ's Mystical Body, and

therefore we must do all in our power to bring about a Christian transformation in social and national life which will secure the Rights of Christ. All men are either actual or potential members of His Body, and as such, have a right to our concern in this matter of so organising society that it is in conformity with the Social Rights of Christ as King over the hearts of men. There is no real social stability where Christ is either ignored or unwelcome. So even here we have our duty because of our membership of the Living Body of Christ. We must know the social teaching of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church. If we are ignorant of that Social teaching we are not functioning as vital and integral parts of that Body. If we have grasped the fact of our privileged place in the Church, our minds must be at One with the Mind of the Church, and so at One with the Mind of Her Head.

So will it also be with regard to the Liturgy. Much has been written and spoken on this theme, and sometimes Catholics are apt to look upon it as the subject suited to those who like to be "high-brow" and "different." Again, if we have become really imbued with St. Paul's doctrine we cannot fail to understand that the Liturgy is no mere "fad" or fancy, but an important consequence of the teaching of the Christian's Oneness with Christ in His Church. For, broadly, the Liturgy is but the Official Prayer of the Mystical Body of Christ, and as such, has a power and efficacy all its own because offered by the WHOLE Church in Union with Its Head—Christ. Private prayer, no matter how good, cannot take its place, for it is the prayer of Christ, and in Him, His Church which is His Own Mystical Body, prays, and in that Official Prayer each unit in that Body is linked to each other and all to Christ. Our participation in the Liturgy is therefore a necessary consequence of our place in the Living Organism, and we join ourselves in prayer to It thereby showing our Oneness in Christ our Head.

This transformation brought about by our grasp of the definite place we occupy in the Church is limitless, for there is not a single aspect of Catholic life and work which it leaves untouched. Every activity which is carried on by the Church becomes a matter of personal concern because we are conscious of our relationship with each and every member of the Church throughout the world. Every act which we ourselves perform takes upon it a greater significance because such an act is viewed as either weakening or strengthening the Mystical Body of Christ.

The weariness of the worker in the Missions of the frozen North or in Equatorial Africa, his triumphs or failures, become matters of moment for each of us. The success of the Church here or Her martyrdom there are brought home to us vividly when we are conscious of our oneness with that Church triumphant or suffering.

Even the more ordinary activities of the Church in the sphere of the Press are made personal responsibilities. Knowing our close unity in Christ we will want to know of the work, progress and welfare of the Faith throughout the whole world, and hence we will look to the Catholic Press to inform us.

We might extend our examples to great length, but space forbids, and so we must be content with leaving you to apply this organic conception of our membership of Christ's Church for yourselves. But, in conclusion, it may be said that without such a conception we will not achieve that activity on behalf of the Faith which Our Holy Father the Pope so desires. Unless we realise our place in the Church then Catholic Action will not inflame our imagination and prompt our will, but with an intense realisation of our place as laymen and women in the Church, in Christ's Own Mystical Body, Catholic Action will follow as naturally as the day follows the night.

If Members of Christ's Body, then we must be active, for life expresses itself in action : if living Cells in the Mystical Body, then our activity will be action in union with the Action of the Body and that, as we know, is the extending of Christ's Reign over all men. In such activity lies CATHOLIC ACTION.

The Saint of the Impossible

P. REDMOND BUCKLEY

To be called the "Saint of the Impossible" is surely a unique distinction even in the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet this title has been awarded by grateful clients to St. Rita of Cascia : : : : : :

TO be called the "Saint of the Impossible" and the "Pleader for the Hopeless" is surely a unique distinction even in the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet these are some of the many titles given by grateful clients to St. Rita of Cascia, whose intercession has obtained many favours which would appear well-nigh incredible, were they not so well attested by evidence. Even during her life, miraculous favours were not wanting to St. Rita, a visible testimony of God's regard for His faithful servant.

At her birth—which local tradition places on May 22nd, 1381—a prodigy similar to that recorded of St. John Chrysostom and St. Ambrose is said to have taken place. For, as she was sleeping in her cradle, bees came in from the garden outside and circled around her, going in and out of her half-open mouth. The old biographers used to see in this a presage of her future life, of the sweet charity which was ever her outstanding characteristic. Certainly, the land in which she lived was redolent of sanctity, for she was born at Roccaporrena, not far from Cascia in the picturesque province of Umbria. That favoured soil has given many saints to the Church of God—the very names of its towns are like a litany—Assisi, Perugia, Cascia, Spoleto, Foligno and Montefalco. To Umbria, too, the world of art is ever indebted for the names of Perugino and Raphael—gentle painter of world-famous Madonnas.

From her mother, Amata Mancini, little Rita learned her first lessons in piety and virtue. Simple, honest, God-fearing people of good peasant stock, Rita's parents gave of their best to their only child. From them she first heard the story of the Passion of Our Lord, and it made a deep impression upon her mind and heart. In the neighbourhood of her home there was more than one convent, and as she heard the bells ringing out their message of peace and recollection across the Umbrian hills, Rita's thoughts turned almost naturally towards the idea of entering the cloister. "She is a good child, thank God!" said her mother, gossiping with the neighbours about this project, "but she is too young." She had to be contented with a little attic, which with childish delight she turned into a sanctuary commemorative of the Passion; and there, before a rude wooden cross, she learnt the lessons that were to stand her in good stead in the troubled years which followed.

Not the cloister, but the married state was to be her vocation in life—and in her case the cross was no light one. Yielding to the urgent desire of her parents, she was betrothed to Paolo Ferdinando, to whom a little later she was married. It was an unfortunate alliance from the first, for Paolo turned out to be a thorough blackguard, vicious, quarrelsome and cruel. In venting his ill-temper upon his patient and long-suffering wife, Paolo did not hesitate to descend even to violence, yet Rita—unlike many of her sex—spoke of his faults to no one, concealing his cruelty under a mantle of silence, and suffering in patience at the foot of the Cross. Her prayer had its due effect, for one day she could not restrain her tears in presence of her husband. It revealed to him the tragedy of their married life, and he became a changed man from that moment. Falling on his knees, he asked pardon of his wife, and as her words of willing forgiveness fell upon his ears, a new and supernatural peace seemed to steal into his heart.

Like sunshine before the storm came this grace into Rita's life. Just as she was rejoicing in her new-found happiness, Paolo was snatched from her. On a dark November evening, whilst making his way home from business in a neighbouring town, he was attacked by three bandits who stabbed him to death. Some kindly neighbours, discovering the body a few hours later, came to break the news to her as gently as possible. Her first reaction was typical of her habitual state of mind: "Poor Paolo! And he was getting so good! To be taken from me now just as he was making up for the past!" But to God's elect sorrows never come alone. Rita's two sons, Giangiacomo and Paolo Maria felt in honour bound to avenge their father's murder. In vain did Rita speak to them of the obligation of forgiveness; in vain did she recall to them Christ's prayer from the Cross for those who had crucified Him. They only brooded the more over the injury they had suffered, and planned a terrible revenge. Once more Rita had recourse to prayer — rather would she see her children dead than see their hands reddened with blood. And her sacrifice was acceptable to God, for within a year the two youths fell ill, and in spite of her loving ministrations they died —but not before their holy mother had filled their hearts with her own spirit of forgiveness and mercy.

ST. RITA OF CASCIA.
Pleader for the Hopeless.
(Feast: May 22nd).

Left alone in the world—parents, husband, children, all were gone—Rita's thoughts turned towards her first vocation. Feeling that God had opened a way for her, she went to see the Abbess of the Augustinian Nuns at Santa Maria Maddalena to discuss the possibility of her entering the convent. The Mother Abbess was gracious but inflexible—the rule of their Order did not permit the

admission of widows as postulants. In vain did Rita plead her cause : nothing could be done ! Back home that evening, when a neighbour enquired where she had been, she answered sadly : " I have been seeking admission to the House of the Lord, and the door was closed in my face ! "

Not for long did the door remain closed—and the manner of its opening is one of the romances of hagiology. Keeping a vigil of prayer one night in her lonely home—tradition says that it was the eve of the Ascension—Rita shed tears of anguish over her frustrate vocation. Suddenly she thought she heard a tapping at the window, whilst a voice whispered urgently : " Be quick, make haste ! It is now the hour ! " Rushing to the door, she beheld her heavenly patrons, surrounded by a halo of light. In response to their sign to follow, she stumbled down the rough mountain path, through the valley and across the hill. Why—they were leading her back to Santa Maria Maddalena ! At their approach, the great convent door opened silently, and as her celestial guides disappeared, Rita found herself kneeling in the convent choir. Can you picture the amazement of the good nuns as they entered choir to chant Matins a short time later and found Rita kneeling motionless in prayer. " How came you here ? " asked the Mother Abbess in wonder ; and as Rita told her story some of the Sisters went to inspect the convent door. The doors were locked and barred as usual—and in the face of such a prodigy what else could be done except to receive Rita as a postulant ?

The time of her noviceship quickly sped by. To Rita, each of the well-filled hours seemed to bring fresh delight. The regular succession of prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, Divine Office and Holy Mass, filled her soul with renewed fervour. Her duties in the kitchen and the refectory proved little trouble to her diligent and housewifely hands—but now she performed them with added care and thoroughness as became one who was a servant of God. Her profession was an occasion for rejoicing to the whole community, and her manifest holiness of life soon became known far and wide beyond the convent walls. Many in affliction and trouble came to seek her help and her advice, and went away happy and contented with the promise of a remembrance in her prayers.

Outstanding in the spiritual life of St. Rita were her spirit of penance and her devotion to the Passion of Our Lord. During Lent it is said that she took nothing save a little bread and water each day. She became so emaciated that the Sisters feared for her life ; but to their solicitous objections she had a ready answer : " I have an unseen food that sustains me ; I find it in the Sacred Wounds of Jesus." One of her biographers remarks that all her thoughts, words and deeds seemed to have their roots in or to have to do with the Passion. It took her at least a fortnight to meditate upon one of the mysteries of the Passion ; and frequently she began at sunset and kept vigil all through the night, her prayer being ended only by the dawning of another day, with its recurrent duties. For more than twenty-five years Rita continued this austere life of penance and mortification, and at length her devotion to the Passion was marvellously and even miraculously rewarded. It was the Lent of 1442, and a famous Franciscan preacher, San Giacomo della Marca, was preaching a course of sermons at Cascia. The whole countryside flocked to hear him, and the Sisters from the convent went in their turn, Rita amongst them. She was present on Holy Thursday, when the preacher selected as his theme the Passion of Our Lord. Profoundly moved by his eloquent appeal, Rita returned to Sta. Maria Maddalena, and entered the oratory to continue her prayer. As she knelt before the crucifix, contemplating the agonised face of Our Saviour beneath His crown of thorns a wonderful prodigy occurred. A beam of light burst forth from the crown of thorns, and like an arrow, a thorn from the crown pierced through her forehead. Blood gushed forth from the wound, and the pain was so intense that the Saint fell fainting upon the ground. There the Sisters found her, and

to their anxious questions she replied, telling them of the favour God had vouchsafed to her.

For eight years that wound remained, until the Jubilee of 1450 was proclaimed by Pope Nicholas V. Rita wished to join the pilgrimage, but was refused permission on account of the disfigurement caused by the still-open wound. Again she prayed earnestly, and the wound healed up completely, leaving no mark behind it. Now in her sixty-ninth year, Rita made her way to Rome on foot accompanied by some of the Sisters. They visited the tomb of the Apostle at St. Peter's, and more than one noteworthy incident of the journey has been recorded by her biographers.

Through the winter of 1456 she suffered much from her infirmities, which had increased greatly owing to her rigid austerities. A pleasant story is told of her last illness which seems almost an anticipation of St. Therese of Lisieux in later years. A friend visited her and asked if she would like anything. "Yes," replied the dying Saint: "I would like a rose from my little garden in the old home at Roccaporrena." It seemed fantastic to ask for roses in mid-winter, but the friend returned to see what she could find. There, blooming in the midst of the snow, was a single red rose, the scent of which filled the whole garden. As she bore it back in triumph to the Saint, it was received as a symbol of the Passion, upon which she had so long meditated and thought.

Fortified by the last Rites of the Church, and surrounded by the weeping Sisters, Rita passed to her eternal reward on May 22nd, 1457—the date which later was observed as her festival. It is said that at her death the convent bells pealed joyously, although tolled by no human hand. Certain it is that the country folk flocked once more to the convent to pay a last tribute of loving respect to "Beata Rita," as they soon began to call her. Her body remained in the cell until the end of the month, showing no sign of decomposition, whilst not a few miraculous cures testified to her sanctity. Throughout the years her cult continued to increase, until it had received the approval of the Church by beatification in 1627. Finally she was canonised by Pope Leo XIII on the Feast of the Ascension, 1900, four hundred and forty-four years after her death. Amongst the greatest miracles attributed to her, one which the Church has declared to be noteworthy is the "perfume which emanates from the body of Blessed Rita, especially when at her invocation, some miracle is performed." This perfume, which is still to be noticed from time to time is well termed "the perennial miracle of St. Rita."

The Glorious Wounds

"Till my hand I have placed in His Side,
And the place of the nails I behold,
I will not believe," thus replied
Saint Thomas in words seeming bold.

Our Saviour, though, does not disdain
To yield to so bold a demand;
Shows the tokens of love that remain
In His Side, in His Feet, in each Hand.

While Saint Thomas emboldened did pray
That Our Lord his strange doubt satisfy,
'Tis revealed that He pleadeth alway
With His radiant Wounds upon high.

While Thy five Wounds like rosy suns shine
And to men plenteous healing bring,
Enough—in Thy Hand I lay mine,
And swear to be true to my King.

VAUGHAN DEVLIN.

The May Queen

D. M. ANDERSON

" You can't mean it, Jack. You're teasing me!" The girl's voice was shrill with disappointment.

" I mean it right enough" he said, slowly. " But I'm sorry for your disappointment."

"NO, Jack, it can't be true!"

The man paused a minute as the horse turned restlessly, then he bent his head and looked at the flushed face and shining eyes of the girl leaning on the gate. The sky was cloudless and blue, the ground was brown, and the field nearly crossed by the lines of the plough that had been making furrows across the earth, and the air was sweet with the smell of newly-turned soil.

" You can't mean it, Jack, you're teasing me!" The girl's voice was shrill with disappointment and anger.

The man watched her closely.

" I mean it right enough," he said, slowly, " it's settled for May Sullivan to be the May Queen. But I'm sorry for your disappointment, Nancy."

" But I'm not disappointed," replied Nancy, sharply, " who wants to be a show figure like that?"

" Women are all alike, and you *are* disappointed, Nancy. You needn't think you can deceive me," and the man smiled thoughtfully.

" Well," burst out the girl, her feelings too deep to be kept to herself. " I am upset right enough. Father Pat threw out a hint that I might be May Queen, and when Grandfather offered to give me a Christmas present and asked me what I would like, I said a white dress, thinking it would be fine when I was May Queen. Oh, Jack, it's such a dream of a dress, and now it's no good."

Nancy bit her lip vigorously, to keep back the tears of mortification and disappointment.

" Well, I don't see that there's such a lot to fret about, in that," said Jack quietly, " you can lend it to May, you are much the same size."

" Lend it to May! Jack, how can you! You cruel, unkind boy, and let everyone admire the lovely dress on another girl. You are the most hard-hearted man in the world and you don't understand a bit. Get on with your ploughing, I'm going home!"

As the young man stood watching Nancy disappearing down the road, he wrinkled his forehead for a moment.

" It will make a difference how she faces this, and I'll see what she's made of. Gee-up, Gipsy," and the horse gave itself a little shake and started working again.

It was only March, and there were several weeks still to May-day, but there was all the arranging and practising to be got through, and Nancy took her part, proudly concealing the annoyance and disappointment, and envy of May Sullivan, that filled her heart. No one realised that she had aspired to be Queen of the May, there were many suitable girls in the village, but all felt that May Sullivan was the most suited, she was so gentle, and good and innocent.

All went well until the last evening in April. Jack watched Nancy closely, though she took no heed of this. She was immersed in her own disappointment, and nursed the devil of pride and jealousy. Often the young man's brows wrinkled thoughtfully. He and Nancy had grown up together, and it had been taken for granted by all, that they would settle down and marry. But Jack

wasn't going to marry a woman he couldn't trust and respect, and so he watched and waited.

The eve of May-day was lovely, clear and warm, with the promise of a fine day in the morning. Nancy was picking a bunch of roses in the garden when she heard the sound of sobbing. She stopped and listened. There was someone near in terrible grief. Yes, it came from the other side of the hedge. Softly she walked across the grass and peeped over. There at the foot of a great oak in a heap of misery, was a girl curled up, crying her heart out. Nancy could not distinguish who she was, she could only see a jumble of blue dress and fair curly hair. Lightly she jumped over the hedge.

"Whatever is the matter?" she asked, stooping over the curled-up heap of misery on the grass.

"Oh, it's too dreadful!" A white face with great drowned blue eyes appeared out of the bundle of grief.

"May Sullivan!" Nancy's voice was hard and surprised, but May was too plunged in misery to notice.

"Oh, it's so dreadful," she repeated, gazing up unseeingly at Nancy. "I am on my way to Father Pat, I can't be Queen of the May!"

A look of hope sprang into Nancy's eyes. Was there a chance for her after all? She sat down gently beside May and asked her what had happened.

"It's my dress!" sobbed May. "It was lying on the kitchen table. I had just put the finishing touches, when mother passed with the tea-pot, caught her foot, tripped, and poured the tea all over my dress." May curled up again in an agony of sobbing.

For a while Nancy sat looking at her. A terrible struggle was raging in her soul. She ran a good chance now of being Queen of the May after all, as good ia chance as the others. She had a lovely white dress! But—suppose she lent t to May? She couldn't! How silly of Jack to have made that remark. She looked down at the sobbing figure, she thought what her feelings would have been if she was in May's place. Then May gasped out:

"Oh, mother is so upset, she is crying, too, and it makes it so much harder."

Nancy sprang to her feet.

"Don't cry any more, May, you shall have my dress. I've a lovely new frock put away, and you are just my size, and it will fit you perfectly. Come on, and I'll show it to you."

May sat up, her tears miraculously stopped, her eyes wide.

"Oh, Nancy, I couldn't, you'll want it!"

"Nonsense!" said Nancy, "I am not wearing white, and anyway I have another white dress."

It was the evening of May-day, the procession, the maypole, and all the gaiety was over, and Nancy stood leaning over the gate of the field where she had met Jack, and he had broken to her the dreadful news that May Sullivan was to be May Queen. She was dreamily watching the rooks flying about, fussing over their preparations for bed, when suddenly two strong arms gripped her, and a voice from behind her said:

"Penny for your thoughts, Miss!"

"Oh, Jack!" she cried, and wriggled round until she faced him. But when she saw his face, she gasped in amazement. The quiet, thoughtful look had gone, and instead, he looked utterly radiant.

"Whatever is the matter, Jack?" the girl cried.

For answer, Jack held her close, and kissed her, with so big a hug that she cried for mercy.

"What has happened to you, Jack?" she gasped.

"You've come through fine and straight, Nancy," he said, "and I'm real proud of you! I'm awfully particular, and I wanted my wife to be straight

and true, and I wondered how it would go with you these last weeks. But you've battled through fine!"

Nancy looked bewildered.

"May Sullivan told me about the dress" continued Jack, stroking her hair.

"Oh!" Nancy flushed crimson.

"Yes," said Jack, "and on our wedding day you are to wear that dress!"

Nancy smiled demurely.

"You haven't asked me to marry you yet!" she observed.

"Well, will you?" Jack demanded.

"Yes!" answered Nancy.

True Friendship

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES SPEAKS OF WHAT IT CONSISTS

LOVE everyone, Philothea (he wrote) with a strenuous love of charity, but have no friendship except for those that communicate with you the things of virtue, and the more exquisite the virtues are, which shall be the matter of your communications, the more perfect shall your friendship also be. If this communication be in the sciences, the friendship is certainly very commendable; but still more so, if it be in the moral virtues—in prudence, discretion, fortitude, and justice. But should your reciprocal communications relate to charity, devotion, and Christian perfection, good God, how precious will friendship be! It will be excellent, because it shall last eternally in God. O how good it is to love on earth as they love in heaven; to learn to cherish each other in this world, as we shall do eternally in the next.

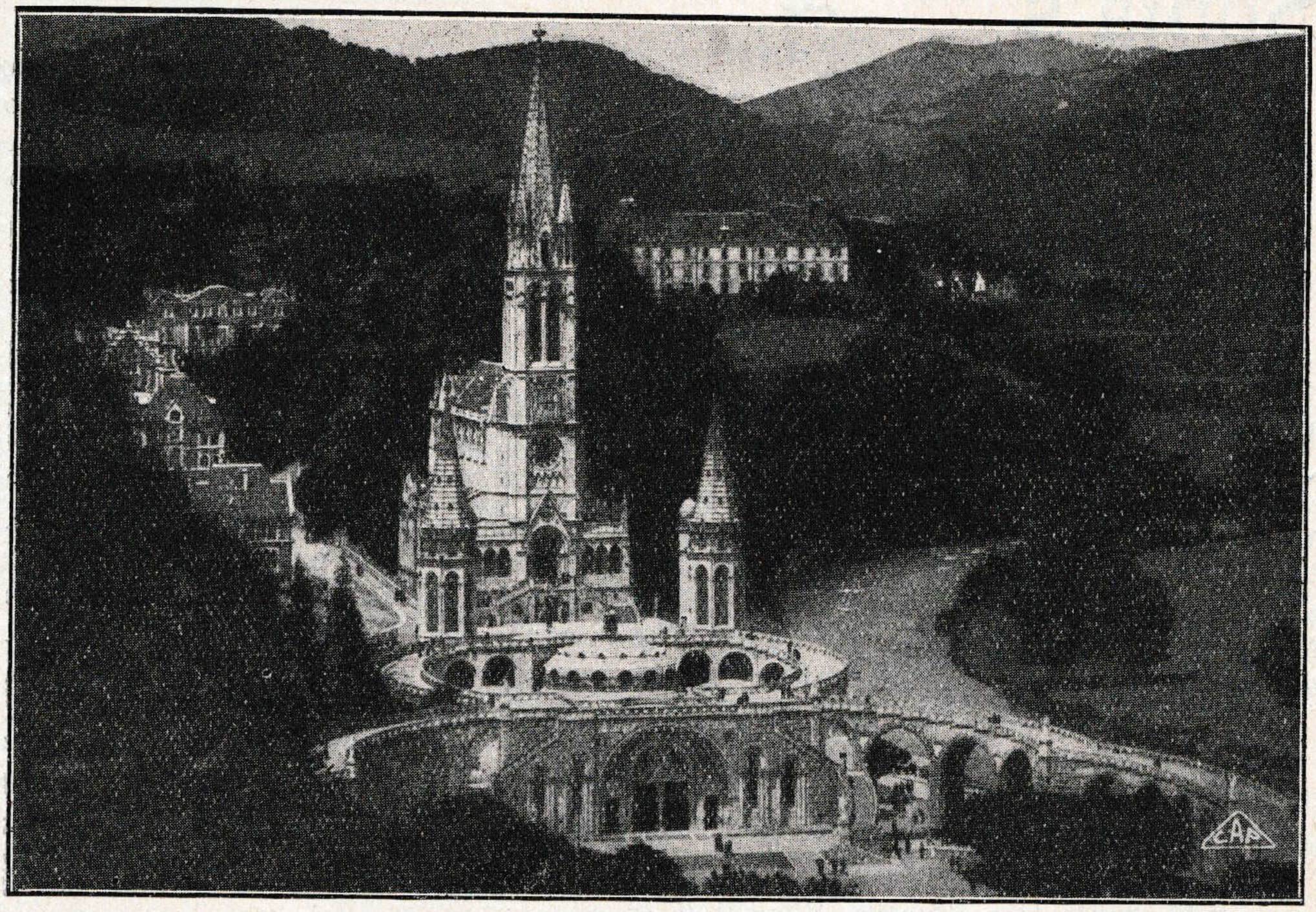
I speak not here of that simple love of charity which we must have for all men; but of that spiritual friendship by which two, three, or more souls communicate one to another their devotion and spiritual affections, and make themselves all but one spirit. Such happy souls may justly sing: Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity—(Ps. cxxxi, 1), for the delicious balm of devotion distils out of one heart into another, by so continual a participation, that it may be said that God has poured out upon their friendship His blessing and life everlasting. I consider all other friendships as but so many shadows in respect of this, and that their bonds are but chains of glass or of jet, in comparison with this bond of holy devotion, which is more precious than gold.

Make no other kind of friendship than this: I speak of such friends as you choose yourself; but you must not therefore forsake or neglect the friendships which nature or former duties oblige you to cultivate with your parents, kindred, benefactors, neighbours, and others.

No one surely can deny but that Our Lord loved St. John, Lazarus, Martha, and Magdalen, with a more sweet and more special friendship. We know that St. Peter tenderly cherished St. Mark and St. Petronilla, as St. Paul did Timothy and St. Thecla. St. Gregory Nazianzen boasts a hundred times of the incomparable friendship he had with the great St. Basil, and describes it in this manner: "It seemed that in the one and the other of us there was but one soul dwelling in two bodies; and if those are not to be believed, who say that all things are in all things, yet of us two you may believe that we were both in each of us, and one in the other; we had each of us only one pretension to cultivate virtue, and to accommodate all the designs of our life to future hopes; going in this manner out of this mortal earth before we died in it." St. Augustine testifies that St. Ambrose loved St. Monica only for the real virtues he saw in her, and that she reciprocally loved him as an angel of God. St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Gregory, St. Bernard, and all the greatest servants of God have had very particular friendships, without prejudice to their perfection. St. Paul, reproaching the disorders of the Gentiles, accuses them that they were people without affection—that is to say, that they had no true friendship. And St. Thomas, with all the wisest philosophers, acknowledges that friendship is a virtue; and he speaks of particular friendship, since, as he says, perfect friendship cannot be extended to a great many persons. Perfection, therefore, consists, not in having no friendship, but in having none but with such as are good, saint-like, and holy.

Spiritual Privileges

All the promoters and supporters of this Magazine participate in the benefits of 434 Masses specially offered every year for benefactors, by the Passionist Fathers, as well as in the prayers and good works performed daily by all members of the Congregation of the Cross and Passion.



LOURDES: THE BASILICA AND THE ROSARY CHURCH.

Fifth Irish National Pilgrimage to Lourdes

13th—23rd September, 1937

UNDER the leadership of His Eminence Cardinal MacRory, and accompanied by the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, the Fifth Irish National Pilgrimage to Lourdes will leave Dublin on Monday, 13th September. In the former National Pilgrimages to Lourdes of 1913, 1924, 1928 and 1933, a very large number availed of this special occasion to travel to the far-famed shrine of Our Lady—there to beg her intercession for the recovery of their sick and to recommend to her their own spiritual and material wants and the welfare of our beloved country. It is confidently hoped that the number who will travel on this occasion will be sufficiently large to express adequately the depth of that devotion to Our Lady, which is one of our proudest national traditions.

A National Pilgrimage Committee has been appointed, representative of every diocese in Ireland. Aided by the valued sympathy and co-operation of many zealous helpers, they hope to make the Pilgrimage next September in every way worthy of the faith and devotion of the Irish people. Particulars regarding the Pilgrimage will be found on page i of the advertisement section of this issue of *The Cross*. The fare for ordinary pilgrims is £13 : 0 : 0; whilst for invalids a special rate of £10 : 5 : 0 has been fixed. Further details may be had from the Pilgrimage Office, Veritas House, 7 & 8 Lr. Abbey Street, Dublin.

For the spiritual benefit of those who cannot travel to Lourdes next September, a special Association of Our Lady of Lourdes has been formed by direction of the Hierarchy. It enables all Irish Catholics to offer their petitions and their homage to Our Blessed Lady in union with the Pilgrimage, thus uniting the whole nation in prayer at the feet of Our Lady of Lourdes. Many special indulgences and favours granted by the Holy See to Associate members are detailed upon a special leaflet. The duties of the Associates are few and simple, and consist chiefly in the daily recital of the prayers of the Association. For adult Associates the subscription is 6d., in return for which they receive the bronze badge and the leaflet of enrolment. For children, who receive a white metal badge, the subscription is 2d. The Pilgrimage Committee depends totally upon these subscriptions to bring deserving invalids to Lourdes, so that it is very important that as large an enrolment as possible should be secured. In this fashion the Pilgrimage can be made a vast national act of devotion to Our Lady one which will obtain for our country abundant spiritual and temporal blessings.

Sonia's Secret

VIN MANNING

A long complete story telling how Sonia surprised her sister on more than one occasion—but her timely help brought Jean's romance to a satisfactory conclusion : : : :

SONIA SEDDON was rummaging feverishly among some papers in a drawer, when she heard the sound of footsteps on the stairs. Quick as lightning, she was across the floor and concealing herself in a large wardrobe. A slim and pretty girl of about twenty-two popped her head into the room. She looked about, and then frowned as her eye fell on the open drawer. With a significant smile, she went on tip-toes across the floor, and then—turned the key in the lock of the wardrobe. Immediately there came a frantic pattering on the panels of the cupboard.

"Let me out, let me out, or I'll scream for dad."

Jean Seddon unlocked the door, and, with a vicious movement, yanked out of hiding her sister, who was some four or five years her junior.

"What were you doing in there?" she demanded, sternly.

"Looking for moth-balls," snapped the young girl, defiantly.

"And were you looking for them in my drawer, too?"

"I wanted a piece of your scented note-paper, and I knew you'd shout if you caught me."

"It's no use lying, Sonia. You're always noseying into my private affairs. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. It's wicked. You're not a child now."

"Well, you treat me like a child. You never take me into your confidence."

"There are—there are certain things that one cannot confide even in one's sister."

"H'm! h'm! Meaning *him*?" Sonia nodded towards the drawer.

"Have you actually been reading my letters?" snapped Jean, with an angry flush.

"Well, I didn't mean to, but—there was one lying open, simply crying to be read. I only got an eyeful."

"You—you impossible, little bounder!"

"I wonder what father would say if he knew you were going out with a Papist!"

"You wouldn't dare tell him, Sonia?"

"Why shouldn't I? I might do it for your own good. I never deceive dad. We're too fond of each other."

"Don't I know it?" cried Jean, bitterly. "But you *will* be decent for once, won't you, dear? You know how dad gets all hot and bothered over nothing."

"Our dad's always impressed on me that I should have nothing to do with Catholics. They're superstitious. They worship a Goddess called Mary. They're all like Guy Fawkes, conspiring to blow up Buckingham Palace and the Houses of Parliament. They say that all us who aren't Catholics will go straight to Hell, when we die, and burn there for ever."

"That's utter rubbish! You're absolutely ignorant!"

"Our dad doesn't tell lies," cried the young girl, indignantly.

"No, my dear, but he's got a bigoted bee in his bonnet. If you only knew—"

"What the blazes are you two girls arguing about up there?" thundered a voice from down below. "Come and get my tea, one of you."

"Coming, dad," called Sonia, cheerfully.

"Now, you'll keep your own counsel, Sonia?" whispered Jean, greatly agitated.

"I might—and then again, I might *not*. If this affair gets serious, it might be my duty to—*split*. . . . Perhaps you'll have the kindness to treat me as a grown-up in future and confide your little secrets in me."

* * * * * *

Sonia Seddon was employed at Glanelli's Glass Works in St. Helens. She wore a brown overall beneath her coat, and she travelled to work with the "common herd" on the workmen's tram. Jean, on the other hand, rose an hour later, and she journeyed to the office on the business men's bus. Returning home on the tram at night, Sonia frequently travelled with a cheery, curly-headed fellow, whom she did not know from Adam, except as a fellow-passenger. Though he wore greasy overalls, and had smears of oil upon his face, he was to Sonia the finest boy in all the world. And she had secretly christened him "Charles," because he seemed "fearless."

One evening he boarded the tram and, to her secret joy, came and sat down beside her.

"Another day's work done!" he cried. "My! I'm just dying for my tea. Could eat the hind-leg off a camel!"

"So could I, too. . . . I—I can cook, you know!"

"Can you really?" He suddenly lifted his cap.

"That a friend of yours gone past?" She shot a swift glance out of the window.

"Charles" grinned: "In a manner of speaking, yes. To be truthful, we have just passed St. Michael's Church."

"And don't we pass it every day?"

"Precisely! and every day I raise my cap."

"But why?"

"Well!" "Charles" flushed somewhat self-consciously, but the child seemed interested, so he went into details.

"Then—then you're a Catholic?" she cried, aghast.

"Sure—why not? Did you expect me to have a Roman nose or something?"

"Dad hates Catholics!" she went on, half to herself.

"That's just too bad!"

"Well, p'raps not really—*hate*, but he certainly can't abide them. Says they're humbugs and traitors and idol worshippers. That's why all the good people became Protestants when Henry the Eighth wanted to marry Queen Elizabeth, or somebody."

"Charles" stared. "History expurgated!" he exclaimed.

"Aren't I right?" she demanded, looking at him more in sorrow than in anger.

"My dear kid," he said, seriously, "your teacher ought to have been hanged, drawn and quartered. That is the kind of thing Ven. Father Dominic had to fight against; ignorance, apathy and false teaching."

"Venerable who?" she appealed for enlightenment.

"You wouldn't have heard of him, of course. Father Dominic, the Passionist, was always conscious of an 'urge' to convert England. My grandfather had the privilege of meeting him when he was a boy in Staffordshire. He was getting on in life when he began his mission in Stone, and, to-day, his body lies only a stone's throw from here at St. Anne's Retreat at Sutton. There is every possibility that he will be canonized a Saint, and then pilgrims from all parts will converge upon Sutton. . . . I'm named after him, by the way. . . ."

So his name was Dominic, she thought. She'd rather have Charles. It sounded nicer. It was more romantic. There had been a Charles the Second, who hid in the Oak; Charles Chaplin, the comedian; and Charles Peace, who fiddled while Rome burnt.

"Are you paying attention to what I'm saying?" demanded Dominic, breaking in upon her thoughts.

"Of course, what were you saying?"

"Tck! tck! Isn't that just like a girl? Why won't you girls *read*—and *think*—and *wonder*—what's going to happen to you when you die?"

Sonia shuddered. "I don't like to think about dying. I suppose we'll all go to Hell when we die—except you Catholics?"

Dominic stared: "Who's told you that?" he snapped.

"My father."

"Your father? I'd like to tell him what I think of him."

"You're not big enough!" She was scornful.

"Oh!" Dominic smiled; it was impossible to be angry with the child; she was so ingenuous. "Well, we shall have to discontinue the argument. Here's where I get off. But—I would earnestly appeal to you, young lady, to use the brains which God has given you. Don't let *anybody* put wrong ideas into your head."

"Except you, of course?"

"Don't take any notice of me either," laughed Dominic. "Just think: you want to be happy and contented; that's a craving in every human being. But this craving can never be gratified in this life. Why? Because this craving, this desire, this—this 'groping in the dark,' comes from the soul, which God alone can appease."

"You interest me, Mr.—Dominic, but you don't prove that your religion is right."

"There, I've been carried on," sighed Dominic, "but it doesn't matter if I can convince you. Briefly, Our Holy Father the Pope, follows in direct succession St. Peter, who was made Head of the Catholic Church by Our Lord Himself, Who promised Eternal Happiness to those who served Him faithfully. That's a fact. Think it over. Bye-bye."

He left Sonia Seddon considerably shaken in mind. She had never imagined that her gay and care-free "Charles" could be so serious. She could not doubt his sincerity. Therefore, either one or the other of them was on a wild-goose chase.

"Dad," she said, that night, when her sister had left the house, "I think I'll get up early on Sunday morning and go to visit Aunt Margaret."

"That's a good idea" replied Mr. Seddon. "She'll be glad to see you. Supposing I come along with you?"

"Oh, no!" Sonia put in hastily. "Your work's so terrifically hard. You must rest on Sunday morning."

"You're right, my dear," smiled her father. "Remember me to Peggy and all the family."

Sonia thought a lot between then and the following Sunday. She even found time to read privately a certain theological book that she had borrowed from a Catholic friend.

On the Sunday morning, she kept her promise and went to visit her Aunt Margaret. But the visit was of short duration, and, at eleven o'clock, she crept shyly into St. Michael's Church. As she left after Mass, she bumped up against her travelling acquaintance, Dominic, who seemed rather haggard.

"Well, I am surprised!" she gasped, her blue eyes wide with innocence. "Fancy meeting you here?"

"It's me that should be surprised." Dominic forced a smile. "What are *you* doing here?"

"Didn't I ought to have come?"

"Anybody can come. I—I'm very pleased."

He seemed a little constrained. She thought he looked wonderful in his

best Sunday suit. Why ! even her sister—with her airs and graces—could have fallen for him.

" It was lovely," she cried. " I really liked it. It seemed so—so real and warm, and such a crowd. And the music was grand. And I loved the statues, and the candles and the flowers and everything. I—I wish *I* was a Catholic."

" There's nothing to stop you becoming one," said Dominic, glancing at his wristlet watch, " but I must ask you to excuse me now."

She caught at his sleeve.

" What's the matter—Dominic ? " she asked, anxiously. " You—you don't look at all well."

" My dear child," there was alarm in his face, " don't be silly. If you really want to know, my—girl's thrown me over."

His girl ! There *was* another girl ! He was in love. She felt a sudden, sharp pain.

" W-why ? " she stammered, with a gulp.

" She refuses to turn a Catholic, and I insisted, as I always will. We had a row, and she broke it off. She's afraid of her dad, or somebody."

Sonia gave a start.

" What's her name ? " she asked, with intuition.

" We needn't mention names " he replied, shortly.

" Yes, we do," she insisted, almost fiercely. " I'll bet it's Jean Seddon, isn't it ? "

He looked considerably startled.

" How on earth ?— "

" Never mind. Do you—really love her ? "

" I do ! " admitted Dominic, with a certain eagerness.

Sonia swallowed. She felt hot and faint. She wanted to go and lie down, to get away—anywhere—but she stayed.

" If she really loved you, Mr. Dominic, she'd become *anything* for your sake."

" I dunno. I can't blame her. She thinks that if I loved her enough, I'd say : ' To hell with religion,' as, alas, some men have done."

Sonia turned away : " I wish you luck, Mr. Dominic."

" Thanks. . . . Say, you never told me *your* name ? "

" We needn't mention names, Mr. Dominic," she said, quietly, and then hurried away.

That afternoon, Sonia waited until her sister had gone upstairs, and then she seated herself on the arm of her father's chair.

" Well," he said, as he put his arm around her, affectionately, " what does my little girl want now ? "

" A great deal," she replied, solemnly.

" Indeed ! " he arched his bushy brows. " Will it cost so much ? "

" It's not a question of money. It's a question—of religion."

" What ? " he frowned.

" Sunday morning," she cried, boldly, " I went to Mass at St. Michael's Church."

" I can stand a lot from you, Sonia," he strove to control himself, " but this is going too far. If I thought for one moment that you were taking this darned religion seriously, I'd— "

" But I *am*, dad." She was calmness personified. And then she went on, in spite of frequent interjections, to give lucid reasons why she thought the Catholic Church was worthy of consideration. She had a ready retort for every objection. How and where she had acquired the knowledge in such a short time, God alone knows.

" One of your biggest objections, dad," she said, in conclusion, " is that Catholics worship Mary. Well," she waved her hand towards the framed portrait

of her late mother hanging over the fireplace, "do we worship dear mamma? Of course, we don't. But," she faltered, slightly, "when—when we look at her picture, we think of her with love and—and remembrance and gratitude. That's what Catholics do, when they kneel before the Statue of the Virgin Mary."

Mr. Seddon sighed, and drew a hand across his forehead.

"I wish to God you hadn't mentioned mother."

"No, you don't like to think of her, because *you don't know whether she's existing or not.* You don't like to think that all that is left of her—is mouldering in the grave. But, she *isn't.* Her soul has gone on. And, if you were a Catholic, you'd be praying for her, and having Masses said for her, so that in God's good time, she could be taken from Purgatory into Heaven."

Mr. Seddon was silent for a long time. Then he sighed again and looked up.

"Child, you amaze me, you—you scare me. I feel there may be something in what you say, after all."

"Wise man, daddy." She stooped and kissed his forehead. "I'll see you later."

She tripped off upstairs. As she entered their bedroom, her sister bounced off the pillow on which she had been lying.

"What do you want coming in here for?" she demanded.

"Are you ill? You've been crying," said Sonia.

"Go away, and leave me alone."

"Have you—fallen out with your young man?"

Jean gave a start. She glared.

"Mind your own business."

"Why did you fall out?" Sonia was insistent.

"I shan't tell you. Will you please go away?"

"I can tell you. You're a weak, silly simpleton! You haven't as much spirit as a—as a fly. You're afraid of dad, because he growls and threatens. He might throw you out. Now, if *I* loved a man, I'd do *anything* for him. I'd chance the consequences."

Jean's face was a picture of amazement, mingled with annoyance.

"Jean," said Sonia, gently, as she sank down on the bed and clasped her sister's hand. "Don't do something you'll regret all your life. Do you really—love this man?"

Jean burst into tears and buried her head against Sonia's shoulder.

"There, there, you've nothing to worry about. Take it from me. Dad won't raise the slightest objection to your marrying a Catholic."

Jean raised her head. Though tears ran down her cheeks, there was astonishment and hope in her expression. Sonia kissed her, and, with difficulty controlling her own emotion, she left the room.

A few nights later, Dominic came and sat beside her on the tram. He was looking bright and cheerful.

"Hello, kid," he said, gaily. "Going to Mass again next Sunday?"

"All being well, Mr. Dominic," she replied, gravely.

"Do you know," he went on, "a miracle has happened. Thanks to the intercession of the Ven. Dominic Barberi, Jean and I are reconciled. She spoke to her father, and she managed to overcome his objections to her marrying a Catholic. Oh! I'm so happy. I feel I could jump the moon."

Sonia jumped to her feet.

"Say, you don't get off here, as a rule?" he said.

"I play according to the rules, Mr. Dominic. I'll be seeing you again—often. But," her voice faltered, "I've got a head. It's reeling round. St. Michael's is the next stop. Maybe—maybe your venerable namesake will cure it for me, if I ask him hard enough."

"Sure, pray by all means, but be practical as well. Here, have an aspirin."

But she was swaying down the tram—a child in years, but a woman in wisdom.

THE MOTHER OF GOD.

The Mother of God

She went Her uncomplaining way,
Not stoically—but as one
Who knew how little She could say
In face of what was being done.

With thought and word in Her control,
And doing only what was good,
In patience She possessed Her soul
Through all Her days of Motherhood.

And when at last She bowed Her Head
On hearing His triumphant call,
To His "Well Done" She must have said:
"'Twas nothing, Son, nothing at all."

P. J. McGUIGAN.

"We Preach Christ Crucified"

"unto them that are called . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God."

1 Cor. I. 25.

NOTE—These two pages, though by no means intended exclusively for members of the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Passion, should be regarded by them as their own special section of *The Cross*.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PASSION AND CONSEQUENCES.

XXIX.—JESUS BEARS HIS OWN CROSS: FALLS; AND ACCEPTS HELP.

"And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple garment from Him and put on His own garments (that all might know Him) and they led Him out to crucify Him" (Mark, XV, 20).

Although Pilate delivered Jesus up to the Jews to be crucified, he appointed a Roman Centurion and soldiers to carry out the execution. . . . The Jews having got their wish were now in a hurry. Outside, the multitude was being held back by the guards while two thieves and three crosses were brought forward. Pilate wrote the title on a tablet "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," and it was hung by a cord round the neck of Jesus . . . . no one looked at it, they were too excited for anything but yells of triumph.

The Cross was laid upon Jesus, and He was placed first, the thieves behind Him. The Centurion divided his soldiers, put some in advance, some in the rear, and a few at each side of Jesus to hold back the mob. Then, with the Centurion riding in front, "Jesus bearing His own Cross, went forth to that place which is called Calvary" (John, XIX, 17).

Exhausted from the Sweat of Blood and a night without rest or sleep; fasting since the previous evening; weak from standing through six trials and the journeys from one tribunal to another; faint from the scourging and crown of thorns; eyes and face and beard clotted with congealed blood and dust; fresh blood flowing from His head as the heavy Cross fell against the thorn-crown; Jesus was unrecognisable, save to such eyes as His Mother's and a few very dear friends, but the crowd would know Him by His familiar garments: while such friends as were there and could see His eyes, would gain courage, for they would see therein only mildness, patience, resignation, and heroic strength of Will.

Around Him thronged the exultant priests and the clamorous mob, while the Centurion and soldiers forced a way through the congestion.

The street through which the procession first passed had a steep descent until it met the main thoroughfare which came down from the Damascus Gate. When Jesus turned this corner, He fell. This stopped progress, and the Centurion coming back, decided Jesus must have help.

At this opportune moment, Our Lady Mary came forward. Doubtless she was not alone; her reserve and dignity would require an escort, and such friends as John, Mary of Cleophas, Salome, and Mary Magdalen, whom we find beside her on Calvary, would surely be with her now. And there were other friends there, for although the enemies of Jesus were in the ascendant, there must have been many sympathisers with Him on that journey. St. Luke (XXIII, 49), tells us that on Calvary "all His acquaintance, and the women who had followed Him from Galilee stood afar off, beholding"; these were in the throng now and would naturally keep close to the Mother of their Lord.

Jesus and Mary might look into each other's eyes ; there was no need for words, they knew each other's soul.

Mothers will understand a little of what Mary endured when she saw her thorn-crowned, bleeding Son as He rose from beneath the Cross on which He was to die. And every thinking man knows that it must have been easier for Jesus to bear the Cross with its pain and shame, than to witness His Mother's anguish now.

Meantime the Centurion saw that he must find someone to carry the Cross for Jesus ; he dare not put such an indignity on a Roman soldier, and it would be dangerous to select one from the agitated rabble. The difficulty was solved when he saw a stranger approaching from the country, evidently coming in for the Pasch. The man might object, but that would avail him nothing ; he was seized, and St. Mark tells us " they **forced** him to take up the Cross."

This man, although then unknown, has been famous ever since. Three Evangelists record his name, " Simon of Cyrene," and St. Mark adds that he was the father of Alexander and Rufus ; his wife was alive at the time and must have suffered at the indignity when she heard of it ; they were all well repaid for it. They were all converted, and Rufus became a zealous missioner. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans (XVI, 23), bids them " Salute Rufus, elect in the Lord, and his mother " ; while Simon s name is forever honoured at the " Fifth Station of the Cross."

Simon at first was very unwilling to carry the Cross ; he had to be " **forced** " ; and that is no wonder ! It was unjust, painful, and degrading ; just as it was all that and more, to Jesus. But Jesus, Who lets nothing done for Him go unrewarded, gave him the grace to bear it resignedly and merit by it.

So we may be subjected to many a humiliation put upon us, and be forced by circumstances to endure it, but that is one of the conditions of discipleship with Jesus, Who has said : " If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me " (Luke, IX, 23). And He Himself will give strength and courage to the weakest to bear all for His sake.

THEMES FOR THOUGHT.

Jesus, spent with weariness, pain, and loss of blood, carries His own Cross.
Love for us, and resignation to His Father's Will, gives Him strength.
Falling under the strain, Jesus gets up again, and with help, perseveres.
His Mother, who comforted Him in Bethlehem, accompanies Him to Calvary.
And loving friends helped Him and her along this way of sorrows.
And a new friend is found to help Jesus to carry the Cross.

PRAYER.

O incomprehensible Creator and Sovereign Lord of the universe, Who didst make the tree to grow and now dost carry the wood on Thy shoulders ! Thou " Who walkest on the wings of the wind " now stumblest on the road to Calvary, and acceptest help from weak men, and sympathy from gentle women.

O King of all humanity, Thine own Standard-bearer, carrying the Cross that is to be the symbol of our redemption, let me learn from Thee to carry my own cross, and from Simon of Cyrene to help carry the cross of others ; and let me learn from Thy compassionate Mother and her true friends to sympathise with everyone in trouble, remembering what Thou hast said : " Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of my little ones, you did it unto me."

REV. FATHER HUBERT, C.P.

NAMES OF DECEASED.

Thomas Donegan (Father of Rev. Fr. Maurice, C.P.), Michael Brophy (Father of Conf. Henry, C.P.), Mother M. Liguori, Sister M. Brendan, Patrick Geraghty, Joseph Mangan, Teresa Medlar, Patrick and May Mortimer.

Child ~ Saints

H. S. LEONARD

Some thirty years ago Pope Pius X prophesied that there would be saints among the children. Benedict XV, too, expressed his reliance upon the power of their prayers. For children have a spiritual sagacity that is all their own : : : : : : : :

ST. TERESA AND THE CROSS.
Marble Group over High Altar in the Chapel of Carmel at Lisieux.

WE hear a great deal to-day of the slogan "Give youth a chance." Perhaps the main reason for the cry is the feeling of disgust at the muddle of affairs made by the older generation who have been at the helm so long and have steered the ship of state so badly. Whatever be the reason, we find that to-day a greater insistence is being laid on youth and its possibilities. The potential forces therein contained are being more clearly envisaged by those in authority, and much practical recognition has been given this truth. The governments of Europe at present seem to be concentrating all their energies on the formation of the youthful idea according to their own principles and ideology, whether these be Fascist or Communist or any other. This procedure is based of course, on a knowledge of ordinary psychology. The child is "father of the man" and the ideas formed in early youth are seldom changed in later life. Usually, therefore, it depends on the formation of the child how the man will develop and result, and because of this fact it is true to say that the destiny of a nation rests with its youth.

It is a happy omen then, for Catholics that there appears a growing tendency to sanctity in the lives of many of the younger generation in our times. Outstanding examples which have been given to the world are receiving notice, and the lives of such as Little Nellie of God, Maria of Padua, Guy de Fontgalland,

and others, are sure to awaken widespread interest and to be productive of much fruit. Actual sanctity in practice is more fertile of results than is the preaching of holiness, and especially is this true in the case of children and the young in general.

Some thirty years ago, Pope Pius X, of saintly memory, prophesied that there would be saints among the children, and he, with his innocent childlike heart, was qualified to speak thus. In a large measure, too, his movement for frequent and daily Communion for all, including children, contributed greatly to bring about the fulfilment of his prediction.

The foundation of this way of spiritual childhood is of the highest authority, and dates back to that occasion when Our Lord, taking a little child, " set him in the midst of them ; and said : ' Amen I say to you, unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven '." But it was left to a saint of our own time to popularise this spiritual method. St. Teresa of the Child Jesus is the modern exponent of this school of spiritual childhood. Following her " little way " countless souls have come to sanctity along the road of complete abandonment to the loving care of God their Father. Nor can it be said that this method is above the understanding of little ones. We are inclined to depreciate the capabilities of children in this respect. But an examination of the lives of any of these child-saints shows that they display a quite astounding comprehension of what is involved in the practice of suffering and sanctity. They have a spiritual sagacity all their own. The word of such an authority as Madame Montessori ought to be sufficient to dispel any doubts we may have on the matter. " The soul of the child is capable of high aspirations " she says in her book *The Child and the Church*, and this statement is amply borne out both in her own work and that of many other teachers of children.

Great confidence is to be placed in the spirituality of children. Pope Benedict XV, following the lead of his saintly predecessor, expressed his reliance on the power of their prayers. One of his public letters at the time of the Great War began with the words " I beg the dear and all-powerful children to hold up their hands for me at the altar." The present Holy Father has ever manifested his care for youth, and has shown his concern for them in his Encyclical Letter on the Christian Education of Youth, wherein he speaks of the predilection " wholly paternal " which he bears towards them. Realising that the destiny of nations and of mankind rests with youth, he has done all in his power to direct their education in the proper channels in an effort to secure the interests of the Church in the struggle against her enemies.

In this insistence on the importance of the child and of the childlike spirit, the Popes are but following the lead of their Divine Master, Who understanding children as no one ever before or since, said : " Unless you be converted and become as little children. . . . "

And the point of all this is that it was to adults that Our Lord addressed these words.

So that after nearly two thousand years we are being given the same lesson as was put before the Jews on that day when Christ set a little child in their midst. It is as true to-day as then that " a little child shall lead them."

We shall find much to interest us in the lives of these child-saints of our day. Their circumstances of life were the same as those which surround us, and from their conduct and reactions to these we can learn many an invaluable lesson. And that too even if we think we have long since put away the things of a child. Remember that Our Lord also said : " See that you despise not one of these little ones." And remember also, that there is a world of difference between being childlike and being childish.

" Know you what it is to be a child ? " said Francis Thompson. " It is to

have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of Baptism. It is to believe in belief. . . . It is—

> To see the world in a grain of sand;
> And heaven in a wild flower,
> Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
> And eternity in an hour."

Yes, there are secrets of heaven that lie within the powers of perception of these little ones, yet to which our ears have long since ceased to be attuned. But though we may not come by these directly, we may still learn them from those nearest to the source. For Wordsworth was more true than he thought when he wrote the line: "Heaven lies about us in our infancy." The same thought is contained in the gospel, which says very plainly that many mysteries shall be revealed to these little ones. Nor is it at all beneath our grown-up dignity to acknowledge that we have something to learn from children. We are never too old to learn, and even the very young can teach us, in a matter of which alas, we have often to admit woeful ignorance, the science of the saints, and the knowledge of God. Anyway, is it not enough for us that the Fount of all Knowledge once said: "He that shall receive one such little child in My Name, receiveth Me"?

Grannie's Prayer

She sits upon the grey and cheerless steps,
Of a drab tenement in Silvertown,
And looks out on the children at play,
Following each other wildly up and down
The muddy street; chasing a flying ball,
A grey-haired woman in a Paisley shawl.

Now and again a little boy of eight,
Comes to her from his playmates, and sits down
Beside her; and his grimy fingers steal
Under her shawl, clutching her beads of brown,
Then with a bound, he rises, and away
To join his waiting comrades at their play.

"Saint Patrick, Brigid, and Saint Columcille,
Watch over him this day, and all his life."
Prays the old woman, as with smiling face,
She sees him triumph in the friendly strife
Free from a wriggling mob he bears the ball,
And rushes on, the fleetest of them all.

She rises from the steps to watch with pride,
The battered ball flying through its destined goal,
Light of her golden youth shines in her eyes,
Prayers of an olden day ring in her soul;
"May God and Mary guard him from all ill,
St. Patrick, Brigid, and Saint Columcille."

MAURICE V. REIDY.

Outside Office Hours!

ALFRED GROSCH

The others were not bad girls. Could it really be wrong then? Thousands did it. Does that make it right? As she gazed at herself in the glass she was torn with conflicting emotions : : : :

THERE was a momentary pause in the clatter that accompanied the daily routine of the busy office. Margaret Smith looked swiftly up from the machine on which she was typing a letter, and a sudden twinge of dismay seized her as she heard two of her fellow-typists discussing plans for the Bank Holiday cycle run which she had agreed to join.

"I'm going to wear my new, dark green velvet shorts with a yellow shirt and a beret," exclaimed one.

"I think we're all wearing them," ventured the other. "At least—" and there followed a slight pause during which Margaret felt certain they were gazing in her direction. "I say, Peg," continued the speaker, "going to don shorts for the cycle run on Monday week?"

Margaret blushed as she turned to answer, but ere she could do so, the other continued.

"You'll have to, you know. We're all going to, even Jerry Manners!"

Without answering, she turned back to her machine and continued at her task. The question of attire had not occurred to her earlier; now, however, try as she would, she could not put thoughts of it out of her mind. She felt that it would take at least some of the enjoyment out of her day if, because she possessed what others termed peculiar ideas—particularly on dress—Mr. Gerald Manners were attached for the day to a shorted and be-shirted colleague.

Not that she cherished any illusions about the matter. Indeed, whenever she did think things over in what she called the cold light of common sense she realised that the other two girls possessed to a greater extent than she did that quality which seems an essential part of a girl's make-up in these days, and which, it appears, is what men are supposed to expect from their friends of the opposite sex.

Therefore, although she felt a little disheartened over the suggestion, she imagined at the same time, that it was but presumption on her part to suppose she could in any case attract the notice of Gerald Manners when there were her two colleagues to choose from; both highly attractive after a fashion, both given to touching up their attractions, and both exceedingly lively and vivacious young people. In shorts and shirts, she concluded, these two would simply fill the picture to the total exclusion of anyone whose tastes were as quiet as hers.

But that she was not to be allowed to settle the matter for herself became increasingly evident as the holiday drew nearer. At all odd moments of the day one or the other would be at her.

"Of course, you'll come in shorts, Peggy. Everybody does nowadays!"

"And it's no use protesting you haven't got any," the other put in, "for I've got a grey velvet pair that'll suit you down to the ground. Why, it would be a crying shame if you turned out dressed otherwise. You've just the right figure for shorts!"

Refusing to listen to Margaret's protests, her friend brought the shorts to the office the following day, and also a shirt-blouse to go with them. In spite of her disinclination she had to make some show of gratitude, and take the things home with her.

Mary, Queen of May

When this life is o'er the dawn will come
Of the eternal day;
Then all thy children shall meet around thy feet
Sweet Queen of May.

In the privacy of her room she tried them on and found, as she had been told, that they gave her a modish and rather attractive appearance. But as she gazed at herself in the glass she was torn with conflicting emotions. Was it right? Yes, perhaps after all it was. The others were not bad girls. Could it really be wrong then? Thousands did it. Does that make it right? Certainly she looked, what was the word, "pert?" Yes, "pert" was the word.

Still undecided, but half inclined to fall in with the suggestion, she put the matter to her confessor, but was in no better mind after she had done so than before. For that good man, not knowing the already tremendous conflict that was raging within, simply said:

"My dear child, there may be no particular sin in wearing shorts, but seeing that it has pleased God that you should be a woman, I really cannot see the need to ape the man. After all, it may be the mode; it may even suit some women, but remember, the position women enjoy to-day is due to Christian ideals, and a Christian ideal presupposes a certain modesty of attire. You may please yourself entirely in the matter, but you've asked my opinion, and I have given it!"

As the day approached she was no nearer solving the problem than she had been a week earlier when she had first brought the apparel home. To make matters more difficult she had a strong personal preference for Gerald Manners not only because he was the nicest man in the office, but also because he was a Catholic. She had discovered that from the fact that he wore a Knight's badge, a secret she kept to herself, leaving the others to conclude that the little gold cross was just a Catholic "charm."

He was by no means the best-looking, or even the best-dressed man on the staff. For that matter his clothes were seldom as new or as dressy as those of his colleagues; but there was invariably an air of distinction about them, and about his way of wearing them that Margaret liked very much. It was just a "something" about him that made him different from the rest.

He had never shown her any preference, and during office hours treated all with the same courtesy and consideration. This was the first time that an opportunity of meeting him out of office hours had occurred. Now that it had come about, there was this appalling dilemma to overcome, which became the more perplexing the longer she thought about it. To add to the difficulty, every time she entered her own room at home there were the shorts and the accompanying shirt, joining their appeal to the appeals of her friends at the office.

The night before the proposed excursion she was still undecided. The following morning she rose early in order that she might start the day by hearing Mass. She dressed carefully in a neat skirt and blouse, over which she put a jacket. Thus attired she went off to church. During Mass she made a special last appeal for guidance, and, strange as it seemed, at the end of the Mass all her doubts had fled. It was a bright, sunny morning. The costume for the day, she decided, was the one she was already wearing, and no consideration of the alleged attractiveness of shorts had weight with her any more.

An hour later she met the rest at the appointed rendezvous. Gerald Manners to the great delight of Margaret, and the surprise of the rest, was clad in a neat plus-fours suit. It seemed therefore but natural that he should pair off with Margaret as the more fitted to match his own sober attire.

The day for her proved a marvellous one. The pleasant sensation of riding comfortably and easily beside so delightful a companion as Gerald Manners was rendered doubly pleasant by the thought that she would have been quite out of place had she given way to the wishes of her friends and turned out attired as they were.

On the return journey they let the others speed ahead whilst they cycled leisurely along.

"You know, Miss Smith, er—I say, need I call you that? I'd rather call you Peggy, if I may," he added.

"Do you really want to?" she asked.

"Ever so much!"

"Then you may," she returned, smiling at him.

"Well, Peggy, somehow I knew you'd turn up dressed like, well, like you are dressed!"

"How did you know?" she ventured.

"I can't say," he returned, "except that I felt, here's a girl that's different. I couldn't see you togged up in shorts and all that silly stuff. You seemed to me, if I may say so, more womanly, more feminine, and after all," he concluded, "a fellow wants a girl to be a girl, not an ungainly imitation of his own sex!"

The friendship so opportunely begun soon ripened to something deeper.

"I say," murmured one of her office friends, a few weeks later, "what a lovely engagement ring. Is it, er, is it—?"

"Gerald Manners," whispered Peggy, supplying the answer.

"Oh, I see," came the reply. "You knew something when you turned up for that cycle ride, didn't you?"

"No," answered Margaret, quite sincerely. "I merely decided that in the circumstances, modesty would be the best policy!"

Do We Lack The Courage . . ?

Do most of us lack the courage to read religious books? I think we do.

Church to us seems necessary—so does sleep. In the same way, we go to church and like the quiet dignity of the Mass, feel elated at the sermon, and then we come out, someone begins a conversation, and we go back to our everyday lives again. The pleasant dreams are over and we are once more awake.

Yet in our hearts we know that it is just the other way round. Our souls are only truly awake when we are in that atmosphere of piety, and sleeping, or dormant, when we leave it. Why? Because we lack the courage to take our religion, our Christianity back with us into our homes.

One way of keeping our souls awake is to read good books. And I have noticed that if a book has the slightest suspicion of being "deep" it is taboo. This is partly through laziness; we dislike having to think, to consider, so we take the line of least resistance, and read magazines consisting of the same silly sentimental stories dished up in various ways; newspapers containing political, sporting and crime articles; or novels that are merely longer stories of the magazine type, that is to say, those of the easy-to-read variety.

We read these and forget them. We may have been amused, we may have been entertained, we may have been interested, we may even have added one or two words to our vocabulary, but are we satisfied?

We notice the review of a religious book. It sounds interesting. We would like to read it. Only typists and clerks like you and me do not read books like that. It isn't done! We could not develop tastes in reading like that—our family, friends or fellow-workers would wonder what had come over us. We have not the nerve! Our excuse to our conscience is that we do not have the time. We forget the time wasted in futile light reading, reading that does nothing to educate us, to build up our character, to satisfy us.

It all boils down to one thing. We lack the courage! We have not the courage to change our habits, to brave the opinion of others.

M. T. WALSHE.

The Virgin Mother

A little meditation for the month of May that will repay careful reading

MAY is the month of Our Lady. It is fitting that this beautiful time of the year, the month of spring and flowers, should be dedicated to God's fairest creature. Each recurring springtime brings out in sharp relief the figure of the Lily of Israel.

The lily is the emblem of purity, and the little Maid of Nazareth stands for all that is good and sweet and holy in womankind. Even in the reflected holiness of her Son the Mother's goodness is not diminished. In her is enshrined every virtue, but in a special manner is that great triumvirate of virtues glorified—faith, love and humility: faith in God's word when she did not understand; love that would put no limit to her sacrifice; humility that prompted her to call herself merely the handmaid of the Lord. In this gracious woman is the most perfect human holiness exemplified; womanhood is exalted to a degree of perfection never attained by any other creature.

Unfortunately there are those who abhor the idea of love and veneration for God's holy Mother. But does honour for the Son forbid honour for the Mother or rather does it not command it? Is it necessary to suppress all love for the Mother to show thereby the greatness of the Son? Did the glory of any son or any daughter ever suffer on account of the honour meted out to the mother? In his contempt for Mary-cult, or Mariolatry as he would call it, the non-Catholic seeks to exalt the God-Man, but in this the Protestant does injury both to the plain injunction of Scripture and the best instincts of our nature.

THE VIRGIN MOTHER

Yet, no matter what is said of her by the misguided who would refuse her honour, Mary is always the Mother of the Redeemer. Her love for her Son and His love for her will always call forth the love and admiration of men. What need for us to praise her who carried in her immaculate bosom the Hope of the world and whom the Holy Spirit inspired St. Elizabeth to hail as blessed among women?

Catholic Thoughts of a Non-Catholic Poet

MARIAN NESBITT

Many poets, outside the pale of the Church, have written in a strangely Catholic strain. In the poems of Longfellow are many fine passages worthy of remembrance : : : : : : : :

HOW very often when listening to sermons, or reading essays and magazine articles are we not struck by the frequent reference to Wordsworth's lines on Our Blessed Lady. They are quoted as a proof that even those outside the Church have some idea of her utter stainlessness, her absolute apartness, so to speak, from all other human beings. Very seldom, however, do we hear mentioned the really beautiful sonnet by Dante Gabriel Rossetti : *Mary's Girlhood*. The writer of it has, it is true, left us much that was quite unworthy of a genius, but he has expressed a very Catholic and devotional spirit in the following :

> This is the Blessed Mary, pre-elect
> God's Virgin . . . .
> Strong in grave peace ; in pity circumspect.
> An angel-watered lily, that near God
> Grows and is quiet. . . .

Or again, in *Versicles and Fragments* :

> These are symbols . . . .
> The seven-thorned briar and the palm seven-leaved
> . . . . Yea, God the Lord
> Shall soon vouchsafe His Son to be her Son.

There is much, too, that is beautiful in *Ave*, the poem beginning :

> Mother of the Fair Delight
> Thou handmaid perfect in God's sight.

Here we find nothing to mar or lessen, whilst, on the other hand, Wordsworth's use of the singularly ugly word "tainted" seems to reduce a high idea to the lowest level of the commonplace. Yet it is neither with Wordsworth nor with Rossetti that we are for the moment concerned ; but with one whom it is often the fashion to decry.

Longfellow voices the feeling of the children of the Church very clearly in those lines, which, by the way are too seldom quoted :

> Virgin and Mother of our dear Redeemer !
> All hearts are touched and softened at her name ;
> Alike the bandit, with the bloody hand,
> The priest, the prince, the scholar, and the peasant,
> The man of deeds, the visionary dreamer,
> Pay homage to her as one ever present.

He then goes on to say that, like "children who have much offended a too indulgent father, we stand, penitent, outside the gate of heaven," whilst she to whom we have "offered our prayers and our confession," goes in before us and intercedes on our behalf. In conclusion, the poet adds :

> If our Faith had given us nothing more
> Than this example of all womanhood,
> This were enough to prove it higher and truer
> Than all the creeds the world had known before.

It may be contended that the above lines are taken from the "Golden Legend," a story founded on the *Legenda Aurea*, written by Jacobus de Voragine, a saintly Dominican Friar, who afterwards became Archbishop of Genoa, and who died

in 1292. But equally was Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" suggested by an old Catholic legend, yet how totally different is his whole tone and spirit from that of Longfellow. The latter gives us many instances of the Catholic viewpoint, so many, in fact, that it is almost impossible to make a selection; they are particularly noticeable in the description of Elsie offering her life for Prince Henry. "After confession, after absolution, when my whole soul was white," she tells him, "this morning in the church I prayed for them (*i.e.*, her parents). God will take care of them, they need me not."

> And in your life let my remembrance linger,
> As something not to trouble and disturb it,
> But to complete it.

The musings of the Abbot Ernestus as he paces the cloisters at sunset are too long for repetition here, but the closing words: "Ah! the souls of those that die are but sunbeams lifted higher," seem to fall like the lovely peace of evening upon the ear.

Truly Catholic, too, is the scene where the monk Pacificus is writing and illuminating in the *scriptorium*. "I must pause awhile," he murmurs, "and wash my pen," for now "I have come to the name of the Lord, and pure from blemish and blot it must be when it writes that Name of mystery." Very characteristic also of the pure-hearted Catholic maiden is the reply of Elsie when Prince Henry says to her:

> This life of ours is a wild aeolian harp of many a joyous strain,
> But under them all there runs a loud perpetual wail as of souls in pain.

To which Elsie replies:

> Faith alone can interpret life, and the heart that aches and bleeds with the stigma
> Of pain, alone bears the likeness of Christ, and can comprehend its dark enigma.

Then, when they are passing over the covered bridge at Lucerne, Henry exclaims:

> God's blessing on the architects who build
> The bridges o'er swift rivers and abysses,
> No less than on the builders of cathedrals,
> Whose massive walls are bridges thrown across
> The dark and terrible abyss of Death.
> Well has the name of Pontifex been given
> Unto the Church's Head, as the chief builder
> And architect of the invisible bridge
> That leads from earth to heaven.

The description of Evangeline is, perhaps, too well known; still, it brings her vividly before us as a type of what her holy religion has made her:

> A celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty
> Shone on her face and encircled her form, when after confession,
> Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.

Then the scene at evening in the village church:

> Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people responded,
> Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the *Ave Maria*
> Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls with devotion translated
> Rose on the ardour of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Again, Evangeline appears as the model of Christian fortitude, when driven from their peaceful homes by a cruel edict, the terrified people of Grand Pré are making their way to the ships that are to carry them afar as exiles for ever: "Halfway down to the shore, she waited in silence not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction." Her faith is upholding her, as the influence of that faith is evident throughout all the trials that followed. It echoes in the

words put into the mouth of the venerable parish priest, Father Felician, who is going with his scattered flock. He tells them to look at the crucifix, and to remember how Our Lord in His agony said : " O Father, forgive them."

> Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people
> Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded that passionate outbreak ;
> And they repeated his prayer, and said : " O Father, forgive them."

Then when Evangeline has been again and again disappointed in her long search for Gabriel : " Patience," the good priest says :

> Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike.
> Therefore accomplish thy labour of love, till the heart is made godlike,
> Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven !

The result of so much suffering and such cruelly frustrated hopes is described by the poet in no un-Catholic spirit :

> Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,
> This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.
> Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow
> Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred Feet of her Saviour.
> Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy, frequenting
> Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city.

Many more examples might be given ; but these will suffice. In conclusion, it may be remarked that the following lines from the sonnet " Giotto's Tower," have a very real simplicity and charm :

> How many lives made beautiful and sweet
> By self-devotion and by self-restraint—
> Whose pleasure is to run without complaint
> On unknown errands of the Paraclete—
> Wanting the reverence of unshodden feet,
> Fail of the nimbus which the artists paint
> Around the shining forehead of the saint,
> And are in their completeness incomplete.

To Blessed Oliver Plunkett

LINES WRITTEN AT DROGHEDA, BEFORE THE MARTYR'S SHRINE, 27th SEPTEMBER, 1936.

We knelt by Oliver's severed head,
And deep in thought
We viewed the wounds where the sabre sped
While the blood was hot.

They hanged him first in a casual way
That the stifled breath
Might thus remain with its quivering clay
For a second death.

They burned his head to complete their shame,
When the axe had done ;
But 'twas timely saved from the furnace flame
By the pitying nun.

And the festered scars still plainly graved
On his cheek and chin
Declare the depths to which minds depraved
Can descend in sin.

They knew he was free as the stainless dove
From plot and plan ;
But he held the faith that the God of Love
Bequeathed to man.

Nor threat nor frown could his soul affright
Nor earthly pains—
And hence we gaze on this ghastly sight
His sad remains.

Oh, Blessed Oliver happily gone
To bright abode,
Pray for the sinner who struggles along
The same hard road.

That God may succour the righteous arm
Confound the wrong
And save the faithful from greater harm
They've suffered long.

One more request we ask of thee
For thou art near
The throne of Heaven's Majesty—
You served Him here.

Join in our prayers that God may grant
The Church's claim
To add the glorious title " Saint "
To thy blessed name.

THOMAS ROGAN.

In a Roman Cemetery

The arched walls are supported by pilasters formed from the bones of men dead for a hundred years. The floor is of dark brown earth, brought from the Holy Land. It is the strangest of all strange burial-places : : : : : :

CATHAL O'BYRNE

IT was our first Sunday morning in Rome, and we had risen early. Passing through the vestibule of our hotel we consulted the Major Domo as to the way we should take to reach the nearest church. Leaving his desk, that splendid personage came out through the courtyard of the hotel and beyond its great iron gates to point the way for us.

"Just go round the corner, cross over to the other side of the Via Veneto, keep on to the end of the Way, it is not far, then turn left and you will see before you an old church with many steps leading up to the door, that is the Church of Santa Maria della Concezione, and it is the nearest church."

We thanked him heartily, and, with a deprecating gesture, performed by passing the forefinger of his right hand quickly to and fro before his mouth, he gave us *Buon Giorno* pleasantly, and went back across the cool space of the marble-paved courtyard to his desk.

Round the corner, the Via Veneto, with its giant trees arched completely across the wide thoroughfare, was, for its short length, as a cool, green cloister, sun-pierced and shadowy and silent. At its end, away in the distance, the huddled roofs of old Rome, down in the city's hollow, shone blue and purple and dusky gold in the morning sunlight. Where we crossed the sun-flecked roadway, an Italian workman sat at his breakfast on a stone bench beneath the trees. His morning meal, spread out for all to see, consisted of a huge chunk of crusted bread, some thick slices of a grey sausage, a straw-covered bottle of chianti, and a great bunch of wine-dark grapes. His menu seemed to us a peculiarly appetising one, and at our passing nod of approval his white teeth flashed in a grin of humorous satisfaction.

It was quite early. The birds had not yet begun to sing in the greenness and darkness of the hanging foliage overhead. Few people were astir, here in the quiet streets and great silent squares on Monte Pincio.

The air was crisp and cool and sweet-smelling with the dewy odour of flowers wafted from the spreading lawns of the Barberini gardens, where the great dark Palace loomed to the West yonder, and Triton, on his fountain, blew from his shell a tossing spray of gossamer that gleamed all grey and silver against its dark brown walls.

Where we walked, suddenly from around a sunny corner, into the green gloom of the Via Veneto, came a little group of youths singing and laughing merrily. Handsome, carefree young Romans they were—wearing wide trousers of some shiny black fabric, like alpaca, white blouse-like shirts, open at the throat, and crimson berets—they made a welcome splash of colour in the quiet, shady place, under the arching trees.

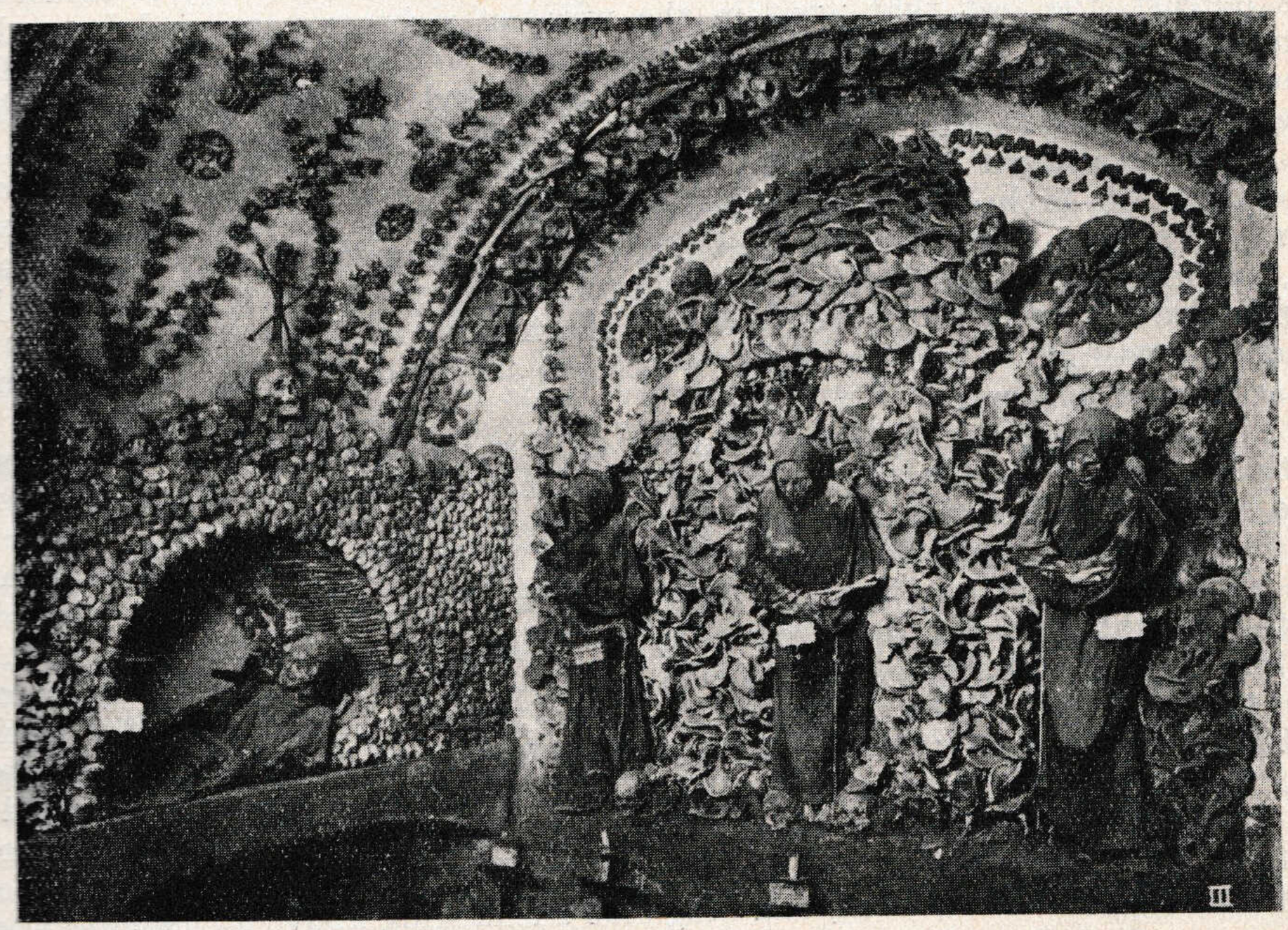
One of their number carried a mandoline, from the neck of which streamed a sheaf of gaily-coloured ribbons, and while he played his companions sang, harmonising the melody in the most exquisite fashion, as they took their way gaily through the quiet of the sunny morning.

Turning the corner to the left, as we were directed, we found ourselves in front of the high steps leading up to the Church of Santa Maria della Concezione, better known as the Church of the Capuchins. The church and convent next door were built in the year 1642 by two of the monks, Antonio and Michele, at

the expense of Cardinal Antonio Barberini, brother of Pope Urban VIII. The Cardinal is buried in front of the High Altar, and the sepulchral slab covering his tomb bears nothing but the words—*Hic jacet pulvis, cinis, et nihil.*

Truly a modest epitaph, and a fitting one to a great Cardinal, who, coming from a Roman family famous for its wealth and power, availed himself of that affluence and aggrandisement but to give with a more princely liberality to the poor, and endow, with all their treasures, this church and convent of the Capuchins.

At the top of the high steps, before entering the church, we turned to look out over Rome. Above its tumble of roofs and spires and towers the morning sunshine was fair and clear. To the north the pine woods of San Onofrio were blue-black on the crest of the Golden Hill, where, to the east, the great Dome of St. Peter, towering over all, was dark against the pale faint gold of the cloudless sky.



IN THE CEMETERY OF THE CAPUCHINS, ROME.

The Church of the Capuchins is renowned for its possession of two famous pictures—Guido's "Saint Michael triumphing over Satan," and Domenichino's "The Death of Saint Francis," and it was in the shadow of the latter sublime fresco that we knelt to hear Mass in the lovely old church of the Franciscans.

Mass over, we followed the congregation—which, to our surprise did not leave by the front entrance—and entered a long corridor that led out from the church past one of the side altars. This corridor ended in a short flight of stone steps, which, following the people in front, we descended, and there and then found ourselves in front of Rome's great "Memento Mori," the world-famous Cemetery of the Capuchins.

The burial vaults of the Capuchins of Rome—they are not subterranean chambers—are four in number, and are open on one side to the corridor, which is lighted by high grated windows, and through which, during our visit, the morning sunlight poured down in slanting beams of golden light. The floor

of the chambers, where the burials actually took place, is of dark brown earth, brought from the Holy Land, and on which no blade of grass is ever allowed to grow.

The graves are forty in number, and the method of burial, it was explained to us, was as follows—the bodies were placed coffinless in the bare ground, and when all the available space was filled up and more room required, those longest buried were disinterred in rotation—none, however, were replaced before being twenty-five years buried—and if, as often occurred—the soil has such a peculiarly drying tendency—the fleshy parts had dried up, the body was dressed in the brown habit, such as it had worn during life, and placed in a niche built up and arched over with the bones of its dead companions.

Here, in this small space, for two hundred and fifty years, have been accumulated the bones of all the members of the Franciscan Order who have died in the Convent of Santa Maria della Concezione. The bodies that had lived, enjoyed and suffered, the hands that were held up in benediction over the sinner and the outcast, the feet that went in the ways of righteousness, and hurried on countless errands of mercy, all have gone back to the good brown earth from whence they came, and their bones have been used to build up this Temple of Death, eloquent to the "Unto this Last" of all human mortality.

The arrangement of the burial chambers is what makes the place of special interest. The arched and vaulted walls are supported by pillars and pilasters formed from the bones of men dead for a hundred years. Row on row are piled up, leaving alcoves for the recumbent brown-robed figures that lie within. The architecture is built up of fragments of the human frame, and decorations are made of small bones and vertebrae, which are arranged over the vaulted ceilings in arabesque designs.

Yet, strange as it may seem, and for all this piling up of dead men's bones, in this strangest of all strange burial-places, there is nothing gruesome or ghastly. The crypts are filled with light and air, and there is no trace of odour whatever.

Outside, beyond the unglazed gratings, the birds sing in the arbutus trees of the Convent garden, and through their iron bars the sunlight falls on the brown earth brought centuries ago from a green height above Jerusalem.

Standing on the high steps outside the church, we looked down once more over the city to where the skeletons of Rome—Caesarean, Etrurian, Latin, Sabine, and Pelasgic—lie unearthed for ever to the world's gaze, under the sun and stars. And as the swift thought came—"Vanity of Vanities"—where we looked to the East, a sudden sunbeam struck the golden cross that crowns the Dome of Peter, gilding it to a rarer gold, where it was raised up to Heaven, symbol of a Faith triumphant over Death, enduring and unchanging above a changing world.

Father Charles, C.P.

To-day we still may walk the paths
Where once he used to tread.
To-day we still may kneel beside
The ashes of the dead.

To-day we still can hear the bells
That called him oft to prayer,
And all around this place he loved
His soul seems everywhere.

The emblem that he loved marks now
His grave, a small white cross,
And overhead are singing birds
And trees their green plumes toss.

The sinner and the sorrowful
Their help find in him yet,
They know though in the Fields of God
Their friend will not forget.

The rich and poor their tribute bring
Deep prayer and blossoms bright,
His spirit through the mounting years
Still sheds a radiance bright.

MAEVE CAVANAGH MACDOWELL.

Serial Story

The Problem Page ~ FRANCES MacBRIDE

CHAPTER V.—*The Advent of John.*

"CHARLES, this is like holding a gun to my head, and demanding my willing surrender," smiled Diana, feeling that her emotions were somewhat mixed. "I like you very much, Charles, and would hate to think you were in a hole from which a word of mine would deliver you, and yet not say it; but I'm very much afraid I'd put you in a much bigger hole by accepting."

"Why?" Charles was making great inroads on Maggie's hot scones, and enjoying them very much.

"Because I feel the job is too big for me. My inexperience is bound to bring about my fall."

"Look here, Diana, we're right back where we started. I'll put it to you frankly. I'll start you on trial for a month, and if you don't please me, I'll ask you to resign. On the other hand, if you please my public, and add anything to the established success of the paper I'll sign you on permanently, with a twenty-five per cent. increase in salary. Now, what could be fairer than that?"

"Nothing, Charles, nothing in the world, except perhaps, the goodness of your heart. I accept on those terms."

"Good job, too! I'd visions of having to sit on your step and howl until you gave in. What a relief! Now I can really enjoy this tea. Hi! Mrs. Kennedy! Could you manage to rush up another batch of scones? They have a peculiar quality. The more I eat, the hungrier I become."

"They'll be ready in a brace of shakes, sir." Maggie lingered a second by the door, then: "If I may make so bold, sir, is that your car by the gate?"

"Yes, Mrs. Kennedy, indeed it is. Why?"

"Because, never in my life have I seen the beat of it. 'Tis that quiet coming up the lane you'd think it was Tabby purring before the fire, and them lovely blue cushions—well, I'll be seeing to the scones, sir."

Charles laughed, and finished his second helping with zest. He gave Diana a few more instructions about her job, and its peculiarities. "You'll have to get the telephone installed," he said. "I can't come galloping down into Sussex every time I want to tick you off."

"Nobody asked you to," retorted Diana. "I'd look well with the telephone, and oil-lamps in the house."

"A sweet combination," said Charles, "I may use that on a future occasion."

"Ass!" said Diana, and threw a cushion at him. They parted amiably some twenty minutes later, Charles declaring she had saved his life and reason. At the gate, he paused as though he had forgotten something. He went round to the back and tapped on the kitchen door. "Mrs. Kennedy," he said, "would you like to try how well the car runs? Just a spin round the village and back."

If Mr. Arrowsmith had said: "Would you like me to hand you the moon and a couple of stars?" Maggie could not have been more astonished.

"But, sir, maybe Miss Diana might not be pleased—oh, it wouldn't be right, sir——"

"Ah, come along, now, Mrs. Kennedy. I'm in your debt, really. just think of those delicious scones."

Trembling with excitement, Maggie was helped into the "Rolls," and sank down on the blue cushions she had admired. The blue and silver monster leaped into life, and quite effortlessly purred along the lane, and the square and the high street of the village. Round past the church and the post office, and, wonder of wonders, sailed past Susan Gatherly's Store and Susan herself, who seeing Maggie perched beside the driver, could only stare helplessly as the cavalcade went by. Fifteen minutes later Maggie, dazed but happy, returned to her own kitchen. She pondered to herself on the charm of Mr. Arrowsmith, who could persuade

an old woman like her to go joy-riding for the first time in her life. She looked round her familiar kitchen as though she were greeting new friends; at the old brown tea-pot and the caddy on the shelf and the yellow-faced clock on the painted wall, and she sighed happily.

"That," she said to herself, "was the loveliest thing that has happened to me for many a long day!"

TWO days later, a neat parcel was delivered at Quain addressed to Diana. It contained the first batch of the letters. Slowly, as though there was something ominous in her action, she slit the first envelope and read:

"Dear Editress,

Lately, I have been worried to death with a most dreadful thought. I am afraid of swallowing a fly. I know I sleep with my mouth open. What shall I do? The fear haunts me day and night. . . ."

Diana wanted to laugh, but then she realised that the woman who wrote that was terribly in earnest and was living in a miniature hell because of her fear. So instead, she wrote, at once:

"Dear Madam,

Your fear is groundless. Flies do not go about at night. Grow mint in your window-boxes and they will not enter your home. Sleeping in a chin strap will keep your mouth from sagging, and incidentally, prevent a double chin, which destroys good looks so. Lastly, don't worry."

"I'll bet she never leaves off that strap," said Diana to herself. "Being interested in looks ought to take her mind off the other thing."

The next letter was in another vein.

"Could you suggest a name for a baby girl born at Easter? I hate all names like Daffodil and Violet, but would like one which suggests Spring. . . ."

"What about Avril, the French for April?" was the answer Diana suggested. Later, the correspondent wrote and told her she was charmed with the suggestion.

One by one Diana plodded through them all, becoming more interested at every step. It was astounding the number of material problems she was asked to solve. An American wanted to know how to go about tracing her ancestors. A timid lady had saved three hundred pounds and wanted to find out a safe investment for it. A young girl asked how one became a film star, and confessed to a limp. A young man had been pilfering from his employers over a number of years, and the moment of disgrace and discovery was almost upon him. A man wanted a fortnight's holiday at a good resort and he had only ten pounds. Out of forty letters sent, twenty-four were concerned with material problems, ten were love entanglements of various kinds, three asked medical questions, and the remaining three were foolish things that could be safely ignored. With that first batch, Diana saw just how difficult her job was going to be. Then and there she drew up her plans. The reference books Charles spoke of would be more than useful, they were an absolute necessity. Next, the telephone was also vital to her success, for she must be in touch with headquarters. As for the love problems, she could expect no help from anyone there. They would have to be answered with her own powers of reasoning and judgment; taking into consideration the writer's person and character, as much as could be gleaned from such a meagre source as a written document. Then her replies must necessarily be brief, if she were not to work a twenty-four hour day. She must learn the knack of saying the most vital things, the real answer to a real problem in the fewest possible words, without appearing to be curt, not an easy job by any means.

AS the days went by, she liked her position more and more. The work was so varied there was not the least chance of its ever becoming monotonous, while her growing sense of humour prevented her losing her temper with the inane, badly-written, futile letters which cropped up every now and then.

In spite of his having suggested that the telephone be installed to save him running up and down, Charles Arrow-

smith's great silent "Rolls" was at the gate usually about once a week. He dropped in, so he said, to see that she was not overworking, and if Diana looked the least pale, he took her off for a spin on the Downs to bring the colour back to her cheeks. He had certainly grown into a very considerate young man, had Mr. Charles Arrowsmith. He came down one afternoon, and to his secret dismay, found she looked so well there was no excuse for taking her from her work. Assuredly, there was a bloom about her now that he had missed in the old days. Diana was of the type whose springtime is always gay and enchanting, but to whom maturity's summer brings hitherto undreamed-of charms. As they discussed the "Problem Page," Charles kept looking at her as though he saw her for the first time. He had always admired Diana, even from the days when she had been the daughter of Stainsforth of Grieve, the most popular among society's younger set, the spoiled darling of a hundred hearts. Now it just occurred to him that there was something pre-eminently lovable about this young woman who had faced the hour of adversity so bravely, and with the same smile as she had taken her joys. He was aware how her pride and self-respect had suffered, and was glad she had cast off the old chains and struck out for herself. He knew human nature well enough by now to realise just how cruel even the best can be. Why, at this very moment there were probably quite a number of women in London who enjoyed the news of Diana's humiliation; yet, she had not stayed there to make an appeal, either verbal or silent, for pity and help.

"Charles, I do wish you would pay attention when I'm talking to you," broke in Diana, with good-humoured impatience. "You are not listening to a word I'm saying."

"Sorry, I was wool-gathering again."

"I was saying that two notices should be inserted at the foot of my column. One is that those who prefer it, and enclose a stamped addressed envelope, can have their queries answered by post. The other is one asking people to be as brief as possible when stating their problems."

"Well, well," he mocked her gently. "Who could have foretold this? My column, indeed! Why you are keener about the job than I am now, Diana!"

"I am keen," admitted Diana. "I'd hate to think any slackness spoiled things for you, Charles. You've been so kind."

"Spoiled things? Well, that's great! Do you know what brought me here to-day? To hand over to you an increase in salary, as per agreement. The circulation has increased twenty per cent. since you took charge."

"You're joking, Charles." Diana's eyes were like stars.

"Well, here's the chartered accountant's letter to prove it. Are you happy?"

"I'm glad it turned out so well for your sake, Charles. I just put all I knew into the job."

"Listen, Diana, what about a little spot of celebration? Let's go up to town and dine and dance at Toni's."

"Thank you, Charles, but I don't want to. I shall never go back to London again."

"But Diana, you can't go on living like a hermit forever. Who or what are you afraid of, anyway?"

"Nothing. Only that I have taken the notion never to go back. Call it pigheadedness, if you like—but that's just how I feel."

"Well, what about Brighton? It is not so far away, and I swear to return you safely to your angel guardian Maggie's keeping at a respectable hour. There's a fine show on there this week and we could have a spot of supper at the Metropole on the way back. Come now, don't cheat me of an evening's fun. Be a sport, Diana."

She looked at the handsome face, with its boyish expression of appeal. "Well," she conceded, "we might go, just this once. Have a look through these replies I have ready while I don my glad rags—that is, if the moths have left me any to don."

READING through the replies, Charles Arrowsmith congratulated himself once more on his piece of good luck in finding Diana. Her ready wit and tact were only equalled by her swift understanding and sympathy with her correspondents. He marvelled at the genius she had in visualising her public, for she never answered the same heart problem for different people in the same way. Although the correspondence was daily growing, she never fussed or lost her head at the amount of work it entailed. What a girl!

An hour later she was like a child enjoying a long-promised treat. Charles Arrowsmith glanced at his companion more than once and there was quiet approval in his glance. It seemed to him wonderful that anyone so dark could wear a black gown so successfully; but then, Diana had a peerless skin, with just a hint of pink on the cheekbones, like the faint flush on apple-blossom, and her eyes lent the only touch of contrast necessary. Beautiful eyes, neither blue nor grey nor green, but of some magic colour like the restless, changing sea. He had always admired her in the days when she had been just a fine playmate and the world their play-garden; now he became aware of deeper possibilities in Diana; to have her always at his side, lovely, and tender and true, might make of their marriage a paradise.

Perhaps it was because it was so long since she had seen one, that she enjoyed the good show so wholeheartedly. Many heads were turned in their direction as they entered the gay Metropole for supper. Charles himself was no mean figure of a man, six feet tall, fair, and with a boyish charm in his features that belied his age. The clock struck the half after ten, breaking in upon their chatter and gay laughter.

"Come along, Cinderella," he said, rising, "I promised your angel guardian Maggie to have you back before twelve in Quain."

Soon they were speeding along the white highway in the still, silent night, the "Rolls" a symphony of colour under a radiant moon. The silence of Goose Common was so profound that Charles and Diana tip-toed up the path at Quain, lest they wake the sleeping village.

"Just like as though we were in church," smiled Diana, from the shadow of the porch.

"I wish we were in church," said Charles, and his voice, though quiet, had a vibrant quality that made her look at him anxiously. "You and I, together, before the minister, promising to love, honour and cherish each other till death do us part."

"Well, good-night, Charles, and thank you for a happy evening," began Diana, but he cut her short.

"Diana, will you marry me?" This time laughter escaped her.

"Charles, really you are tiresome at times," she said, "you choose the most inopportune moments for your jokes! Are you proposing marriage to me? Why didn't you do it on the Brighton road when we had time to spare? Why, if Maggie is about and overheard you, what on earth would she think?"

"I don't know, and I don't care!" Charles did not raise his voice, but the words were deadly clear. "Look here, Diana! I'm serious about this—I was never further from jokes in my life. I have been more than half in love with you all the time I've known you, but it's only since I met you again that I've realised it to the full. It would be sheer madness for me to let you walk out of my life again. I love you, Diana. Say you care for me—a little?"

HE was ten years her senior, he had good looks, a splendid position, wealth and charming manners to recommend him, and yet, with all her understanding heart, she pitied him. Her gay mood fell from her.

"I'm serious, too, Charles. I do care for you sincerely, and you have honoured me by your proposal of marriage. Had this been in any other setting, I might have given you a different answer. Two years ago, perhaps, on a night like this, under such a moon—who knows? But life

has changed terribly for me, Charles, changed so that everyone with whom I am linked must feel that change, too. Are you thinking well of what this might mean to you, and your career if you linked yourself with me? You, who have planned news so often, cannot your imagination tell you what sort of paragraph would follow the announcement of our engagement? Charles, what folly to dream that happiness could be yours that way!"

"If this is folly, then let me be the king of fools," he said bitterly.

"An uncommitted folly is an eternal wisdom, Charles. Am I the kind of person a mother would welcome into her home as the prospective wife of her son?"

"You're terribly bitter, Diana. People have forgotten this long ago. Besides, what has it all to do with you?"

"Only that I have a conscience, Charles. Perhaps if I cared less about you and your good name, I might say yes."

He stood there looking down at her earnest face, moon-whitened, his blue eyes gloomy and full of pain.

"Please don't take it so, Charles. Presently, you'll meet a really nice girl and she'll make you the kind of wife you'll never have any regrets over."

"I'm not a bit like that, Diana, and you know it. There are plenty of girls of my acquaintance, all admirable in their own way, but there's only been one all my life—you."

"I'm sorry, Charles, sorry I can't in the way you want. Please don't let it spoil our friendship. I'm not going to be trite and offer to be a sister to you; I want merely to blot this half-hour out—forever. Let's start again at the time we left the car and began tip-toeing up the path. I appreciate your friendship more than I can say. After all, you were the only one of them all who ever stepped out of the ranks to say 'Hello' to me."

"Is there any use hoping you'll change your mind, Diana? I don't want to pester you, but still, if at any time you find you could give me a different answer—well, I'd like you to know I was there, waiting."

Diana felt a sudden tightening at her throat, a mist in her eyes.

"Good-night, Charles," she whispered, and turned indoors.

Upstairs in her own room, she did not light the lamp Maggie had set ready. She put off her little white jacket and sat down by the window in time to see Charles turn the "Rolls" in the lane and vanish into the quiet dark. She cupped her chin in her palms and gazed out over the moonlit fields.

Charles was a good match, or so he would have been estimated by the people of her old world. Yet, though she was in a precarious, desolate situation, and when such a match would have been most advantageous, she had refused him. She had refused him because of the manner of her father's death. It was true what she had told Charles; the stigma rested on her. Yet, deep down in her heart she knew it was not quite the true answer.

What was the true answer? A strange urge that she only half-understood—the desire to atone, to wipe out by some word or act of her own, performed at some sacrifice to herself, the stigma and disgrace of her father's death. To whom the atonement was due, and what actuated the desire she did not know. Some unknown power was at work in her soul, with the ability to move her like a leaf in the wind; and she was suddenly afraid, and bowing her head, she burst into silent tears.

Next Month: CHAPTER VI.—
Sorrow at Quain.

CATHOLICS!

SUPPORT the publications that support your cause;
IGNORE the publications that ignore your rights and principles;
FIGHT the publications that fight your immortal interests.

In the good press you have a means of sharing in the apostolate asked of you in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of joining all those who seek the highest good of their neighbour and their country.

Passionist Notes and News

CHINA.

Progress in Hunan.

Mgr. Cuthbert O'Gara, C.P., returning to his Vicariate of Yuanling after leave of absence, was struck with the great changes that had taken place since he left, states *The Tablet* (London). Formerly the only route to his Vicariate was along the tortuous Yuan river aboard a sampan, the trip taking several days. A 'bus road now runs into Western Hunan, so that he was able to come from Changsha, the capital of Hunan, in a couple of days. In one year, Western Hunan has made more progress than in the preceding two decades. The influence of the Central Government is felt everywhere.

New Mission Procurator.

It is announced that Fr. Cormac Shanahan, C.P., has been appointed Mission Procurator for the Passionists in China. The office had been held temporarily by Fr. Theophane Maguire, C.P., Editor of *The Sign*, since the death of Fr. Silvan Latour, who during the long time that he acted as Mission Procurator made the deepest and most lasting impression. Fr. Cormac also refers to the great progress made in Hunan in the last twelve months. There are now roads for motor buses in three different directions from the central mission at Yuanling. A period of comparative peace has followed the last Red invasion of 1936, which proved an acid test of the patience and indomitable courage of the missionaries. Writes Fr. Flavian Mullins, C.P. : " Outside of bandits our district is peaceful ; the section with most bandits being around Yungshun," whilst another adds : " What a grand country it could be, if they only left the poor people in peace ! "

ITALY.

Honour for Passionist Bishop.

His Majesty Victor Emmanuele III, King-Emperor of Italy, has conferred the high honour of Commander of the Crown of Italy upon Mgr. Stanizlaus Battistelli, C.P., Bishop of Soana and Pitigliano.

ROME.

Cause of Ven. Dominic.

On April 20th, at the Vatican, a general meeting of the Sacred Congregation of Rites discussed the heroicity of the virtues of Ven. Dominic of the Mother of God. Should the discussion prove favourable, as we confidently hope that it will, the Supreme Pontiff will issue a decree in solemn form approving the heroicity of the virtue of the Servant of God.

By direction of Most Rev. Fr. Titus, C.P., General of the Congregation, special prayers have been offered in all the Passionist churches throughout the world, with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament followed by Benediction. We earnestly request the prayers of all our readers for the speedy and successful conclusion of the Cause.

TANGANYIKA.

All in a Day's Work !

Writing from the Passionist Mission, Kondoa Irangi, Rev. Fr. Theodore, C.P., describes a piece of unwonted excitement at the Mission lately. " We spent most of the day looking at a road-race ! Forty-two motor-cars set out from Nairobi in a race to Johannesburg, between two and three thousand miles away. If you have any idea of African roads you'll know what that means. They passed quite close to the Mission. The natives did not know what to make of it at all. They had been warned to keep off the road and formed the most extraordinary ideas about it. Some of them thought there was a war on ; others that three thousand cars were in the race. Some thought they would be shot if they were seen anywhere near the road, and others that there was to be an aeroplane accompanying the cars to drop stones on anyone near the road. The result was that most of them locked themselves in their houses for the day ! However, it's all in a day's work ! "

Progress of the Cause of Fr. Charles, C.P.

From the annual report of the Postulator of the Passionist Congregation, we extract the following items showing the progress made during the year 1936 in the Cause of the Beatification of Fr. Charles, C.P.

JANUARY 14—At the ordinary meeting of the Cardinals and officials of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, held at the Vatican, an item on the agenda dealt with the *non-cultu* given to the Servant of God, Charles of St. Andrew ; but since a great deal of business had to be transacted, the question *de non cultu* was not treated of until January 21st. On January 28th a favourable verdict was issued on the question.

FEBRUARY 8—Remissorial Letters were addressed to the Archbishop of Dublin and to the Bishop of Ruremond for the compilation of the Apostolic Process dealing with the virtues and miracles *in specie* of the Servant of God, Charles of St. Andrew.

OCTOBER 2—At Ruremond, Holland, the Apostolic Process dealing with the virtues, etc., of the Servant of God, Charles of St. Andrew, is commenced, at the instance of Fr. Edmund, Vice-postulator.

OCTOBER 26—At Dublin, Ireland, the Apostolic Process dealing with the virtues, etc., of the Servant of God, Charles of St. Andrew, is commenced, at the instance of Fr. Gerald, Vice-postulator.

DECEMBER 5—The power is given to the Bishop of Southwark, England, to interrogate two witnesses, members of the Passionist Congregation, regarding the virtues and miracles *in specie* of the Servant of God, Charles of St. Andrew.

Our Question Box: : Answers to our Readers' Queries.

"Teach me goodness, discipline and knowledge."—Ps. cxviii., 66.

"FIXED" OR "MOVABLE."

Please explain what is meant by "fixed" and "movable" feasts.—"A Dublin Reader" (Dublin).

The feasts of the Church which are celebrated on the same date each year are called fixed. Thus, Christmas always comes on December 25th. Those which do not occur on the same date every year are called movable. This variation of time in their celebration happens because all centre about Easter, which may fall on any date between March 22nd and April 25th, inclusively. The method of reckoning the date of Easter has come down to us from the first Christians who were converts from Judaism. They had been accustomed to celebrate their great feast day of the Passover according to the time of the occurrence of the first full moon after the vernal equinox on March 21st. And they began to reckon their new chief festival of the Resurrection in the same way. Thus we now celebrate Easter on the first Sunday following the first full moon that comes after March 21st. Ascension Day, 4 weeks after the Resurrection, and Pentecost, 10 days after that, naturally depend upon the date of Easter. The time of Advent, too, is not fixed. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, and this may occur as early as November 27th or as late as December 3rd.

MASS FOR A JEW.

Can I have a Mass said for the soul of a deceased Jewish friend?—"A.J.B." (Birmingham).

A private Mass can be recited for any person, living or dead, who is not known to be beyond the reach of God's mercy. It is proper, however, that the Church should not publicly offer the Mass for one who neither gives nor has given testimony of any desire to belong to her public visible communion.

BEADS FOR A FRIEND.

If I give a pair of beads blessed for myself and used by myself, to another person, can she obtain all the indulgences attached to them?—"Rosary" (Co. Cork).

Yes. According to the Code of Canon Law, such indulgences do not cease with the transfer from one person to another, as was formerly the case. The transfer may be in the nature of a permanent gift or a temporary loan.

PASSIONIST HABIT.

Will you kindly give me some idea of the origin of the Passionist habit?—"M.B." (Dublin).

In the *Life of St. Paul of the Cross* we read that one day in the summer of 1720 (he was then 36 years of age) the saint, returning from church, was wrapped up in an ecstasy. In this he saw himself clothed in a long black tunic, with a white cross on the breast of it and the sacred name of Jesus in white letters underneath. Shortly afterwards, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him and showed him the same habit, except that now to the word Jesus were added XPI PASSIO. And finally, the Mother of God again came to St. Paul, herself clothed exactly as the Passionists are to-day.

AT TENEBRAE.

Will you please tell me what is meant at Tenebrae services, when all the lights but one are extinguished, and that one is removed and then brought back upon the Altar?—"Curious" (Dublin).

The extinguishing of the candles during the Tenebrae (darkness), one being put out after each Psalm that is chanted, marks the spirit of the Church during this time of sorrow and desolation. The topmost candle, representing Our Blessed Lord, is not extinguished, but is removed to signify His death. The earthquake which occurred at that time is symbolized in the noise made by the clergy with their books. The hidden candle is then brought forth and replaced on the candlestick as an emblem of the Risen Saviour.

EASTER AND CHRISTMAS.

I have had a friendly dispute about the relative importance of Easter and Christmas. Which of the two Feasts do you consider the greater in the eyes of the Church?—"John" (Dublin).

Although, of course, the two Feasts are inseparable, it seems to us that, without detracting from the happiness of Christmas, the more important in the Church's eyes is Easter Sunday. It is called in the Church's Martyrology "the solemnity of solemnities"; and whereas the number of "Alleluias" in her Divine Office averages eight daily, at Eastertide we find as many as one hundred and eighty-five. As Fr. Rickaby remarks: "The Church is almost boisterous in her expressions of joy." Christmas marks the beginning of Our Lord's visible work upon earth, but Easter signifies its glorious fulfilment. Even with all the joy that Christ felt in His sacrifice, we cannot forget that Christmas saw Him a poor, helpless Infant, about to begin His life of suffering, while Easter terminates all His sorrows and commemorates His triumph and eternal glory as the Son of Man. Without the Resurrection, Good Friday would destroy all the happiness of Christmas, and would make the Church, deprived of the living Christ, a headless impossibility. Without His Risen Body there would be no Holy Eucharist, no Mass.

SEVERAL INTENTIONS.

May a person hear Holy Mass for more than one intention?—"A. C." (Dublin).

Holy Mass may be heard for several intentions. One may hear it in order to glorify God, to thank Him for benefits received, to petition Him for more favours, to satisfy for sin, and to be more united with Him. These intentions may be simultaneous.

WHY "CATHOLIC"?

How did the name "Catholic" come to be applied to the Church? What is its exact meaning?—"A Catholic" (Dublin).

The word Catholic is from two Greek words, meaning "throughout the whole," "universal," and is thus used by the old Greek and early Christian writers. It was but natural that the term should come to be applied to the Church which was to teach all nations and to last for all days. And thus, almost from the very beginning, we find the title Catholic coupled by the Fathers with the word Church, to denote the Church of Christ. So it appears in a letter of St. Ignatius dated A.D. 110.

At first, however, the term was used not only to designate the universal local extension of the Church, but also to mark that "she teaches universally and without curtailment all the truths of faith which ought to be known to men, because she brings under God's yoke all races of men, because she heals all kinds of sins and nourishes every form of virtue." (*St. Cyril of Jerusalem, A.D.* 347).

It was not until the Church's struggle with the Donatists in the fourth century that the full theological significance of the title as applied to the Church to-day was brought out, especially by St. Optatus and St. Augustine. This is the idea of Catholicity in the sense of "local diffusion." Thus the Council of Trent declared: "The third mark of the Church is that she is Catholic, that is universal." And justly is she called Catholic, because as St. Augustine says: "She is diffused by the splendour of one faith from the rising to the setting sun. Unlike republics of human institution or the conventicles of heretics, she is not circumscribed within the limit of any one kingdom, nor confined to the members of any one society of men, but embraces within the amplitude of her love all mankind, whether barbarians or Scythians, slaves or freemen, male or female."

PATRON SAINTS.

Who are the patron-saints of solicitors' clerks and typists?—"Interested" (Cork).

Saint Ivo, also known as St. Ives, is generally regarded as the patron of lawyers and all who follow the legal profession. Born at Kermartin in Brittany, he practised law at Rennes. Later he was ordained in 1284 and became parish-priest of Tredrez. He was famous as the "lawyer of the poor" and was canonised in 1347, his feast being observed on May 19th.

As the Church has not yet enrolled any typist in the Catalogue of the Saints, we are afraid that there is no special patron for this profession.

COMMUNION AT SODALITY MASS.

By receiving Holy Communion at a Mass, other than my Sodality Mass, do I gain the indulgence of the latter?—"Curious" (Belfast).

Yes, because the essential condition for gaining the indulgence, *i.e.*, the reception of Holy Communion, has been observed. You may receive Holy Communion at another Mass, or even in another church altogether, if this should be more convenient for you. However, if possible you should do your best to facilitate parochial arrangements by receiving Holy Communion at the Sodality Mass.

MASS "PRO PACE"

When the Forty Hours' Adoration is on, why is Mass said on the second day with the priests vested in violet, and without the "Gloria"? Has it a penitential meaning?—P.H. (Dublin).

The rubrics for the devotion of the Forty Hours' Adoration direct that on the second day of the exposition, a votive Mass "*pro pace*" (for peace) be celebrated, usually at an altar different from that on which the Blessed Sacrament is exposed. In accordance with the rubrics also, the *Gloria* is omitted and violet vestments are used. The use of violet vestments in this connection has not precisely a penitential meaning, but rather indicates an attitude of petition and supplication on the part of the Church, who is asking from Almighty God the great blessing of peace amidst troubled times.

BLESSED LINEN.

I have a small piece of linen, carefully wrapped up and marked on the outside "Blessed Linen." Could you please tell me to what it belongs and why so called?—P.H. (Dublin).

It is obvious that an answer to this question must be in the nature of a surmise. Many articles may receive the blessing of the Church, for there is included in the Ritual a form of blessing "*ad omnia*" (for all things, *i.e.*, unspecified objects). We might therefore conclude that some pious member of the family had this piece of linen blessed by a priest, possibly on the occasion of some illness, and afterwards preserved it in a spirit of devotion. Would it not be easier for you to enquire in your own home whence it came?

SCAPULAR MEDAL.

Could I gain an indulgence by wearing a scapular medal, being enrolled only in the Brown Scapular; or must I be enrolled in all the scapulars?—M.P. (Dublin).

Since you are enrolled only in one scapular, that of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, you can gain only the indulgences attached to that scapular. The medal, blessed in the prescribed form, suffices for one or more scapulars; but to gain the indulgences one must previously have been enrolled.

NOTE.

We remind readers that questions intended for the "Question Box" **must** be accompanied by full name and address. Pen-names may be used for publication only.

The Guild of St. Gabriel

A Literary Circle for Young Readers of "The Cross."

Conducted by Francis.

RULES OF THE GUILD.

I. The Guild of St. Gabriel is a literary circle : open to boys and girls under 19 years of age.

II. The members will be expected to spread devotion to St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, by practising the virtues of purity, charity and truth. and by living lives worthy of him who is to be their model and their guide.

III. They will endeavour to bring as many new members as they can into the Guild of St. Gabriel.

THE Spring has passed swiftly onward, beautifying the land, and now we are gliding into the loveliness of May, the month of blossoms and of Our Blessed Lady, the Mother of Our Divine Lord. Everywhere the sweetness of this time surrounds us. The glory of the sunshine shimmering on the white and pink blossoms of the hawthorn, and the great flower-scented branches of the chestnut tree makes the fields and gardens a veritable land of unforgettable beauty, while the tall tulips and slender lilies and various-coloured gilly flowers are filling the lawn with their fragrance and charm. In the wild places, by wood and stream we look for the swaying bluebells and the fair iris and delicate fern. What a wondrous sight is a bank or glade filled with masses of bluebells ! How they call to mind the blue of our Heavenly Mother's cloak, and draw our thoughts upwards to the gardens of Heaven, where we can picture her amongst blossoms more beautiful than the blooms of earth !

In this the month of Mary let us children of St. Gabriel make her altar fairer than ever in her honour, and let us pray with increased fervour. She who is the source of all love and grace will pour down on us the blessings of her Divine Son, and make us happy for evermore.

MY POST BAG.

Such a big, fat postbag as has arrived this month ! Such a mighty task as confronts *Francis* ! Essays, long and short, come from all parts in shoals, and most of them are so fine that it would require a microscope to discover the best and most worthy of the prizes. *Francis* must don a thinking cap before deciding. After a long silence, my little friends at *St. Gerard's Hospital, Coleshill, Birmingham*, have returned, carrying the sunshine of their presence. There are many new-comers from there who are most welcome to swell the Guild ranks. What has become of Muriel Brine ? We are lonely for her. Has she gone home ? I know DOROTHY BARRY is well and at school. Welcome warm to KATHLEEN ARNOLD, MARGARET FITZGERALD, MURIEL SAVAGE, and HILDA and JEAN. The last two forgot to give their surnames. I am grateful for all their little letters. How splendid Hilda can write at the age of six years ! I am sure you feel proud of your prize-winning, PETER SWALES, and glad you made the effort. It must be difficult for you to write in such a position. WINNIE MOORHEAD and SHEILA JOHNSTONE are going to Lourdes this year. Lucky little girls ! May Our Lady give them the gift of good health. GEORGE FREEMAN writes a beautiful essay on Mary, the Mother of God. It is full of tenderness and love for Our Lady, and I pray she may reward him with the greatest of all gifts. I am glad you are feeling better, George. Little BETTY FLOYD is a newcomer we are very glad to have. God bless every day of her life with joy.

FROM SUNNY CO. DOWN.

From the fair land of Kilkeel, Co. Down, come several bright and kindly little letters from the Mackay family, and, needless to say, they are as welcome to our corner as the sweet blossoms of summer. Their names : ROISIN MACKAY, EAMON MACKAY, CLARE MACKAY AND SEAMUS MACKAY. I am sure they will prove worthy members of our Guild. Roisin is a great worker for *The Cross*. Father Vivian would be very proud if he got a peep into all the letters from the Mackays. He comes first in their house, says Clare, so *Francis* is a big bit jealous. Eamon's writing is splendid. How few could write so well in such circumstances ? Roisin sends five new members : EILEEN CUNNINGHAM, MAURA CUNNINGHAM, CASSY COMAN, ANNIE CONSALVES and MAURA NOLAN. I have enrolled their names in the Guild register, and hope to hear from them all soon. May St. Gabriel keep them under his care. What a splendid little letter is yours, Seamus Mackay ! Some day I hope you will be a great Passionist "like Fr. Vivian and Fr. Valentine." Of

course there are Passionist missionaries in China, and if you want to know of their good works read *The Sign*. You are a wonderful little boy to be able to recite in Irish "Pearse's Oration at the Grave of O'Donovan Rossa." There is hope for our country when little men of seven years have such oratorical powers. I wish I could hear you, and see Clare dancing Irish jigs and reels in her fine style. A big packet of letters and essays has reached me from the *Mercy Convent, Swinford*, and from *Newbridge, Co. Kildare*. It is a joy to greet all my new friends. A warm handshake to MARGARET LYCETT and MAURA O'ROURKE, and JENNIE who forgot to sign her surname. They are full of praise for *The Cross*, and delight in the stories, especially the fine serial. Their essays display much merit. I hope they will come often in the future. MAUREEN O'BRIEN is also equally welcome to our circle.

LETTERS FROM NIGERIA.

It is good to see how far and wide our Guild is known and loved. From distant Calabar, Nigeria, two letters have come across the great seas to *Francis*. I was glad to hear from JACOB AJOMIWE again. He is most welcome to our Guild, and is now enrolled a member. His new recruits are also heartily welcome. We extend an Irish greeting to: MICHAEL E. O. BASSEY, BENJAMIN OKORIE, FRANCIS O. TONADE and MICHAEL CLUCHER. A badge will be sent to Jacob. I trust St. Gabriel will intercede with God for all his requests, and give him a full share of happiness. JACK and BETTY HEELAN are with us once more. Betty's little letter is bubbling over with news. She is a privileged little one, and is so happy because she was allowed to strew flowers twice in front of the Blessed Sacrament at the Altar of Repose. Jack tells of two love-birds that Betty got as a present. She gave Jack one, and they both find much amusement in watching them at play. EITHNE MARRON is charmed with her prize book. She intends to "read it again and again." I sympathise with Eithne on her aunt's death. May the good God give her happiness in heaven. A truly delightful letter comes from PATRICIA O'FLYNN of the Ursuline Convent, Thurles, and I enjoyed every line of it. Some day I hope she may capture some of the Guild prizes for herself. Every kind wish to my young friends in the "Third Year." Tell them to write soon again. Congratulations to ELEANOR DARGAN on her success. Carfin must be a lovely spot. Well, JOE MACSHORTALL, it is good to know you have been Confirmed, and that you got along so well with the Bishop. If you keep that pledge you will be a fine soldier one day—perhaps, "a gen-ee-ral" no less. Remember I am waiting for that salute. My post bag would not be the same without the letters of SHEILA and MARY MCANDREW. That is an amusing tale of your Mount Argus cat. Some day you might write the history of his adventures. I am glad you appreciate "Fr. Paul Mary Pakenham." *Francis*, too, hopes and prays for his beatification. He possessed all the traits of a great man, religion and patriotism, humility and sacrifice. Surely he is high in heaven to-day. Mary is poetic in her description of Mount Argus: "with the little crocuses peeping out from the grass." Many thanks for nice letter, CATHERINE MCFERRAN. I liked your essay well. BRENDAN CORRIGAN has written to tell of his new hobby. He is saving the Guild pages, and has a series of them from November, 1933, to March, 1937. He is very proud of his collection.

THE AWARDS.

In the competition for the best essay on "My School and My Friends" the prize is awarded to JOAN MCCARTHY, *Brigidine Convent, Mountrath, Leix*.

In the competition for the best essay on "Mary, the Mother of God," the prize goes to KITTY O'BYRNE, *Convent of Mercy, Swinford, Co. Mayo*.

In the competition for the best essay on "What I should like to be when I grow up" the prize is awarded to PETER SWALES, *St. Gerard's Hospital, Coleshill, Birmingham, England*.

Badges of St. Gabriel are awarded to ROISIN MACKAY, *Lisieux, Kilkeel, Co. Down*, and JACOB W. AJOMIWE, *Trinity Church, Calabar, Nigeria*.

JUNE COMPETITIONS.

FOR MEMBERS AGED 16 TO 19—A Prize is offered for the best essay on "An Adventure I have had."

FOR MEMBERS AGED 13 TO 16—A Prize is offered for the best essay on "How I should like to spend my Holidays."

FOR MEMBERS UNDER 13—A Prize is offered for the best sketch, or painting, of June flowers.

SEND BEFORE MAY 10TH.

St. Gabriel's Guild

COUPON MAY, 1937

DIXON HEMPENSTALL OPTICIANS

Axpel

12 SUFFOLK STREET